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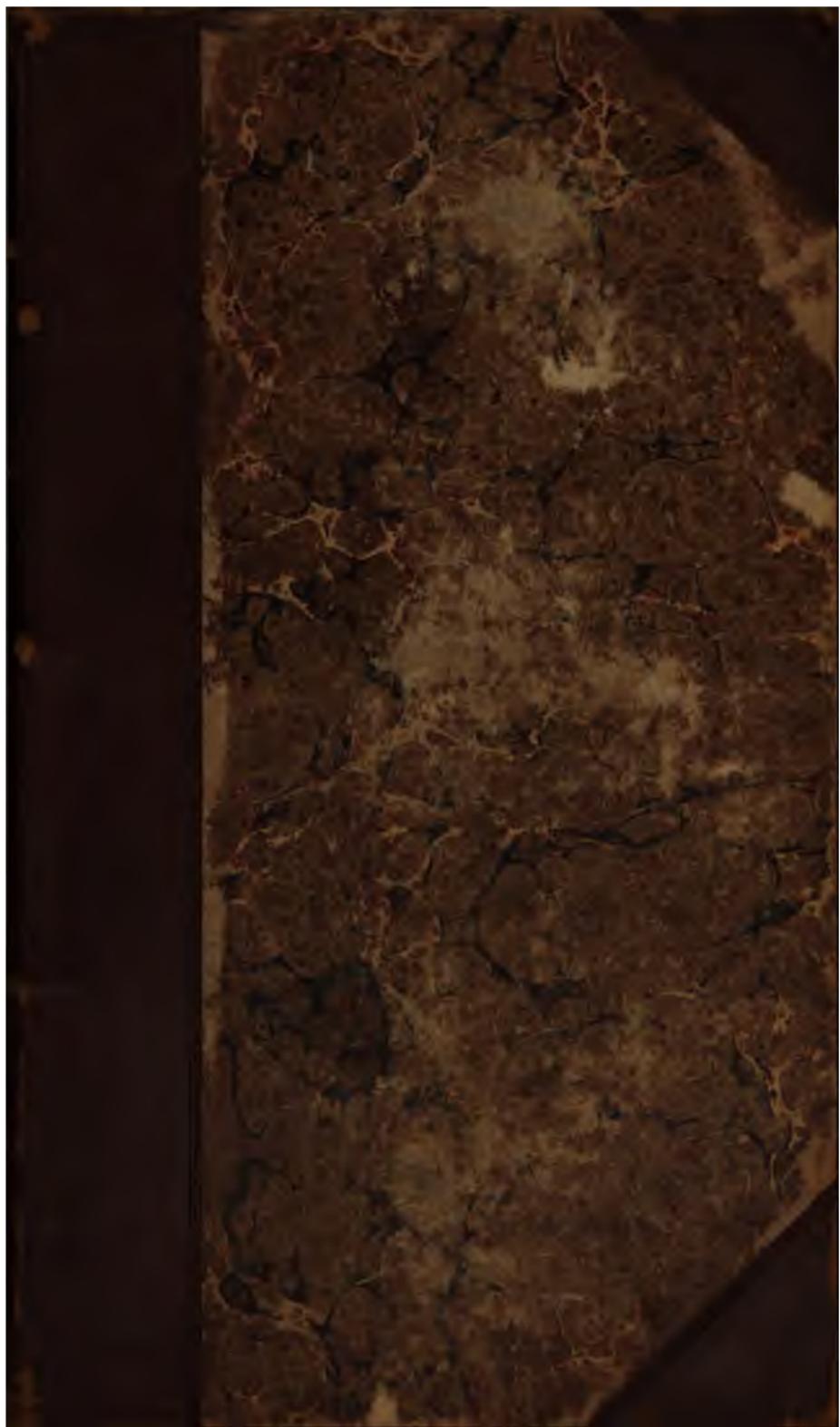
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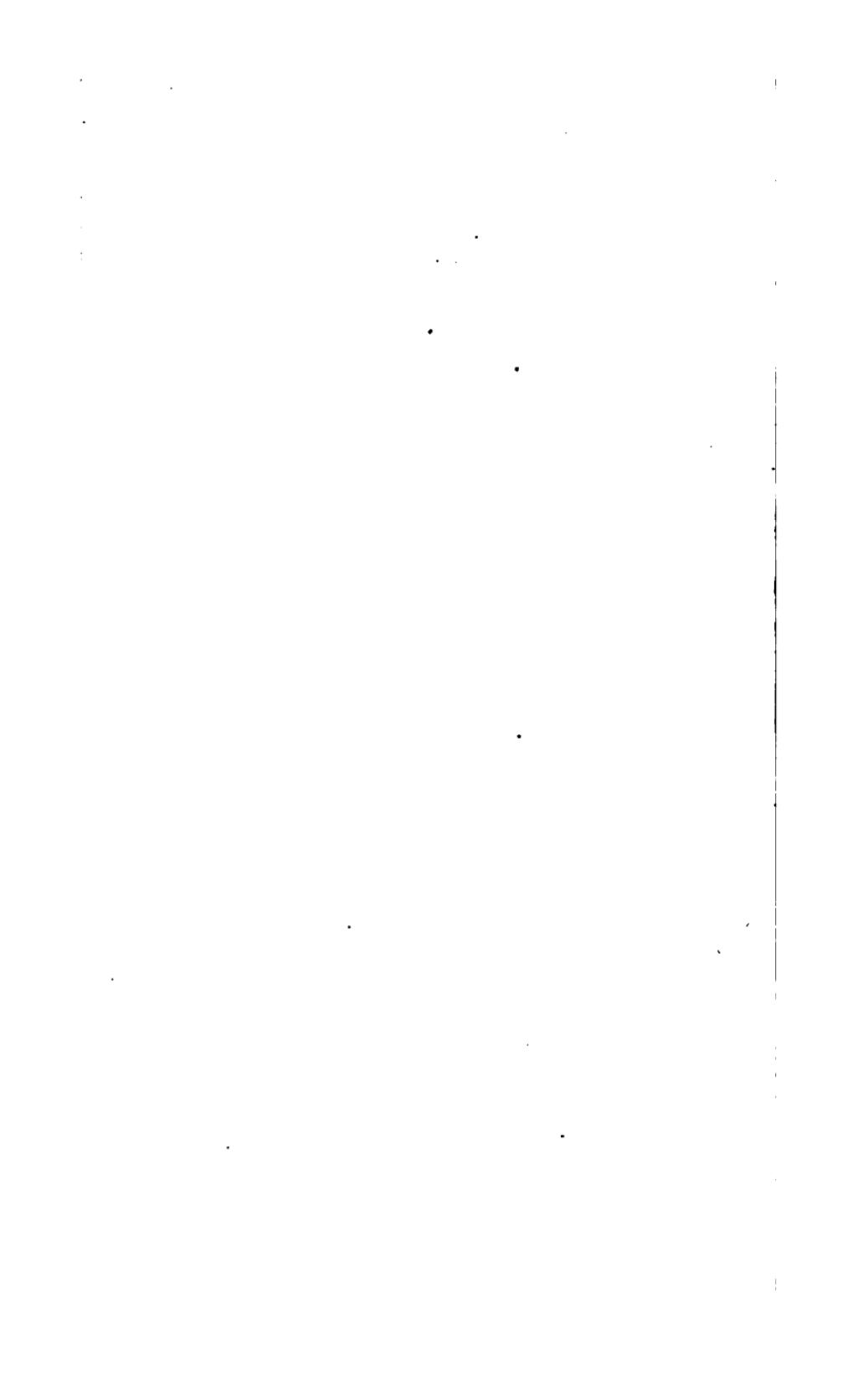
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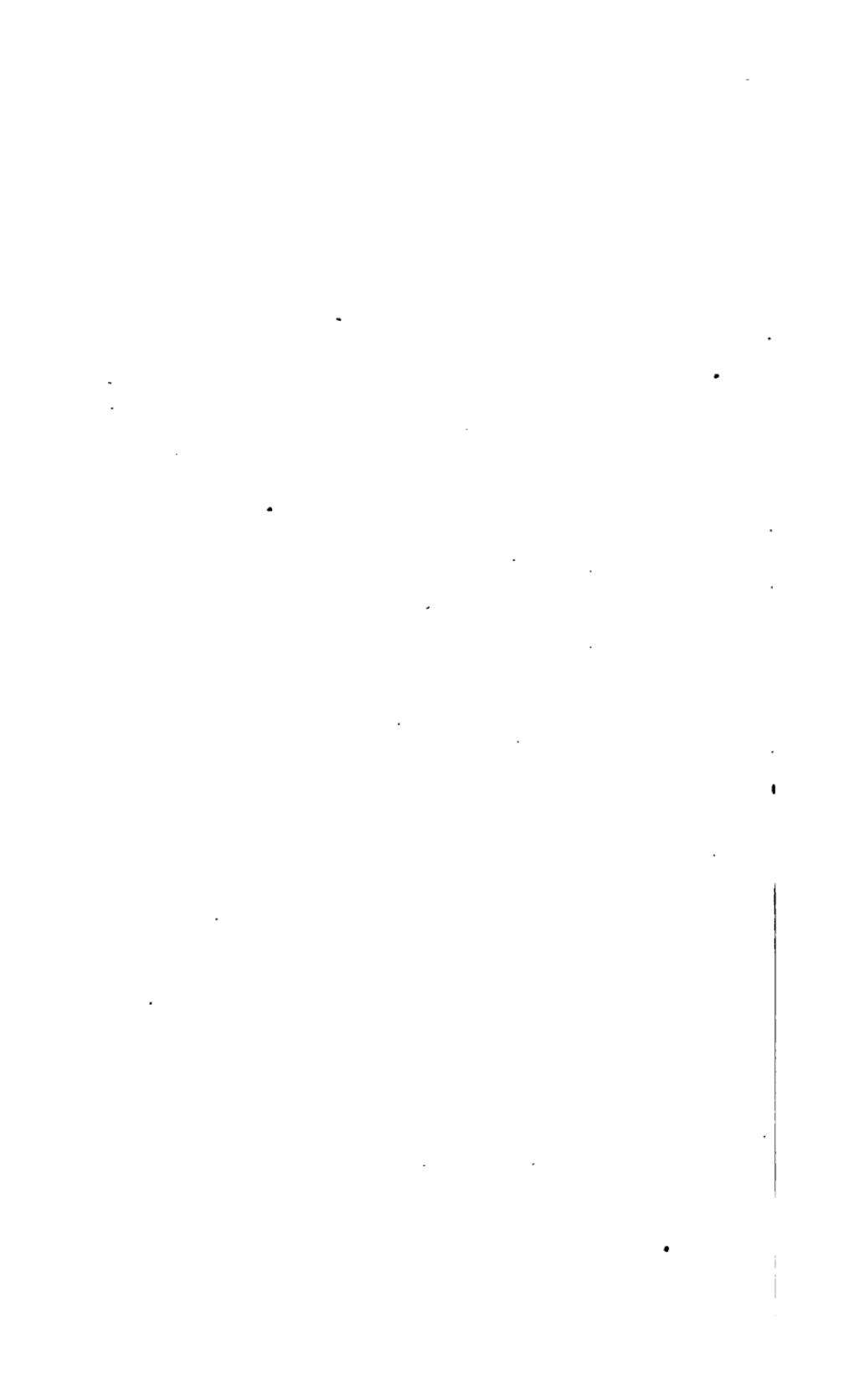
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LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

OR,

The Cornish Parochial Visitor.

EDITED BY

THE REV. H. A. SIMCOE.

VOL. II.



CORNISH:

REV. H. A. SIMCOE, PENHEALE-PRESS.

Published by

L. B. SEELEY AND SONS, FLEET-STREET, LONDON,
AND W. CATER, LAUNCESTON.

1833.

THE PRACTICAL THERAPIST

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No. XIII.]

JANUARY 1833.

[VOL. II.



THE CORNISH PAROCHIAL VISITOR

'A HAPPY New Year to you.' As we are not of the number of those who think that every thing *old* ought to be got rid of as soon as possible, or that it is sufficient reason to think any thing good because it is *new*, we adopt this old friendly salutation; nor are we afraid to say, that, among the many visitors who greet your ears with this friendly wish, none does it more sincerely than THE CORNISH PAROCHIAL VISITOR. In the mouth of many, this wish is a mere waste of words,

an idle compliment; in the mouth of many more, it is forgotten as soon as spoken, or at best never followed up by practice. It is not so with us: our wish, which this morning lies on your table, we intend to follow up with all the might that God may give us; and that too, whether cheered by approving smiles, welcome as December's suns in this cold world, and hope-inspiring as April's gleams amidst its showers; or scared by disapproving frowns, dark as the Atlantic blasts, which ever and anon sweep, as with the besom of destruction, over the astonished face of our Cornish Moors,—“through evil report or good report.”

In order to follow up this our wish, as it regards our different readers, it is our intention, “whereto we have already attained to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing;” still would we follow up our wish to those that seek their happiness in sin, by solemnly testifying that “there is no peace to the wicked;” to those that seek it in the world, that “the fashion of this world passeth away,” that “if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,” that a dying world can never satisfy a never-dying soul; to those who inquire the way, by shewing them the Scripture-path of happiness—peace with God, as a reconciled Father—to be sought and welcomed through our Lord Jesus Christ: and to those that are acquainted with that blessed way, by the word of comfort, encouragement, exhortation, by bringing forth out of our stores things new and old as God may enable us. More than this, we desire to forget the steps already trod; to lay ourselves out for your happiness with more zeal, love, and prayerful diligence, and so much the more, as we see “the day approaching.”

We have passed together through a year marked by no common events. The awful pestilence, which has carried off its thousands; the moral pestilence which has so largely shewn itself this year in the unbelieving rejection of Jehovah as the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth; in the wide-wasting sin of Sabbath-breaking; in the spirit of disaffection to all rightful order and Government in Church and State; we have felt to be dark and solemn signs of the times. We enter upon another year; and lo! wondrous mercy! the pestilence which has made so many childless, has wailingly left our shores, yet must it be said, "Ye have not returned unto me." Well, then, the alarm of war, another of God's judgments, sounds in our ears. After 17 years of peace, the rumour of war is heard, a war too, which, however it may end, leads us to tremble for that which is or ought to be dearer to us than all beside—our Protestant Constitution in Church and State.*

But if these things be so, where is the prospect of a happy New Year? Why let the believer know, "The Lord reigneth;" amidst the darkest clouds, the chariot wheels of Providence and Grace roll right on to the final consummation of the glorious purposes of Jehovah; the same signs too that discover the great wrath of Satan, shew us (blessed be God) that his time is short. The Lord too has given us some brighter signs. We have still some salt in our land; some that plead hard with

* From the circumstance of its being carried on in Union with Infidel and Republican France, against (as far as we know) the only Government in Europe true to the Protestant cause. It is a striking fact, that the King of Holland, contrary to the pattern set him by the unbelieving Governments of these days, has publicly acknowledged the Sovereignty of the Lord of Hosts, by appointing a day for himself and his people to approach God in prayer for his protection in the event of war.

not a moment, but for whom we had long ago born us down, and have like unto Gomorrah. We have had some to fight the battles of the Lord in our last Parliament,* and every ground to hope the Lord will raise us more in the same; above all, it is a cheering sign that God is evidently raising an increase of faithful men in the minister of our Church, and still using us as a great means to carry His Gospel into the dark corners of the earth, and still crowning that Gospel with success—still more, amidst every dark cloud, “a happy New Year to you.” But if there ever was a time when happiness was confined to the “little flock” of them “that are Christ’s,” surely it is now. Now, when God is so evidently shaking every nation, every constitution, every institution, surely the man that has nothing to look to but his happiness beyond the things that may be shaken, and will be removed by being shaken, (*Haggai ii. 6, 7, with *Liter. vii. 26, 27.**) had better call his condition *wretchedness* than *happiness*.

O, our Readers, you that are still rejoicing in any thing that may be shaken, if you would see ‘a happy New Year,’ those old things must pass away, and all things become new, your happiness has no foundation, be you who or what you may. Search our pages, you will see that Scripture statement, living and dying voices, bear witness that happiness is no where to be found but in the love of God as a reconciled Father in Christ Jesus—it is our best New Year’s wish, that you may be led this year there to seek and there to find it.

To you who have found it there, it is our best

* In Churchmen and Cornishmen, we cannot pass over in silence the powerful and Christian, though alas, unsuccessful, opposition of the Bishop of our own Diocese, to that most dismal effect of the Infidel Liberalism of our times—the yielding to the Papists in the Question of Irish Education.

New Year's wish that your hearts may be comforted, strengthened, established, settled; it will be our endeavour, therefore, that you may find in our pages both milk for babes, and strong meat for those who "by reason of use" are able to digest it. Thus we set out with the desire to provide for the happiness of every Reader, as God may enable us; beseeching you to unite with us in prayer, that He who alone giveth the increase, may grant us such wisdom and grace, faithfulness and love, that our Monthly Visits may bring glory to His Name, and make good, in many a blessed instance, the desire of our hearts, 'A happy New Year to you.'

THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

No. IV.

WINTER.

"O Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art!"

THUS sung a Poet of the last century, whose harp genius strung, and religion tuned in so noble and delightful a manner, as to make us forget, while we listen to his sweet and pious strains, the dreariness of the present season. So enamoured was Cowper with Winter, that he composed no less than three separate poems upon this subject. If any therefore of our readers are disposed to think that the Poet chose but a barren theme to occupy his muse, we recommend them to read his 'Winter Evening,' and the 'Winter Morning Walk,' as well as the 'Winter's Walk at Noon.' When they have followed him in the series of meditations to which he and his lofty predecessor, Thomson, have

God; a remnant, but for whom we had long ago been as Sodom, and been like unto Gomorrah. We have had some to fight the battles of the Lord in our last Parliament,* and every ground to hope the Lord will raise up some in this also; above all, it is a cheering sign that God is evidently raising an increase of faithful men in the ministry of our Church, and still using us as a great means to carry His Gospel into the dark corners of the earth, and still crowning that Gospel with success---still then, amidst every dark cloud, ‘a happy New Year to you.’ But if there ever was a time when happiness was confined to the “little flock” of them “that are Christ’s,” surely it is now. Now; when God is so evidently shaking every nation, every constitution, every foundation, surely the man that has nothing to look to for his happiness beyond the things that may be shaken, and will be removed by being shaken, (Haggai ii. 6, 7, with Hebr. xii. 26, 27,) had better call his condition *madness* than happiness.

O, our Readers, you that are still rejoicing in anything that may be shaken, if you would see ‘a happy New Year,’ these old things must pass away, and all things become new, your happiness has no foundation, be you who or what you may. Search our pages, you will see that Scripture statement, living and dying scenes, bear witness that happiness is no where to be found but in the love of God as a reconciled Father in Christ Jesus—it is our best New Year’s wish, that you may be led this year there to seek and there to find it.

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struck the finest chords of poetic feeling and description, we think they will agree with us, that Winter may be as full of agreeable and profitable ideas as even summer itself. It is therefore much to be lamented, that so many persons, especially of the poorer class, are apt, like the dormouse, to sleep away so large a portion of those wintery hours, which would if rightly employed have been highly favourable to the purposes of mental cultivation, and religious improvement.

To the Christian Naturalist, Winter abounds with subjects of grand and interesting contemplation. What indeed can be more worthy of attention, than that beautiful, fleecy, mantle in which nature so often wraps herself during this season. Let us stand a moment,



and watch the descending shower of snow ! With what softness and grace does it fall, and repose upon the bosom of the earth ! How lovely and pure the whiteness of the flakes, and how curiously disposed in chrystals of various forms ! And then, how marvellous the process by which water in its descent from the clouds is thus suddenly changed into a substance as entirely

unlike rain, as rain is unlike air. This is one of the wonderful transformations of nature upon which many, however, gaze heedlessly, because they have so often seen it before. Did they reflect a little, they would see that there is nothing in nature more remarkable, or more worthy of admiration than this rapid conversion of water into snow or ice. Those indeed, who from always living in the hot climates of the world, have never witnessed such a spectacle, can hardly be brought to believe in the possibility of it, even upon the strongest testimony. And we who have seen it so frequently, are almost as much in ignorance of the precise laws by which this change takes place, (and this too in the age of Chemistry,) as before that surprising science was discovered. Surely, then, this ignorance should teach us no small degree of humility and modesty in speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: for if we are at a loss to understand the secrets of a drop of frozen water, how can we presume to fathom the depths of God's Almighty providence; or to reason upon his character who is as wonderful in his counsels of grace as he is excellent in the works of nature.

Winter is in truth one of those seasons in which the greatness of God as a Creator, and his Sovereign and Almighty power are strikingly shewn. Job, in his majestic description of the works of God, refers to this season in language of the most exalted kind. He places it in point of dignity next to the thunder and lightning; for after describing these most awful and impressive of all nature's wonders, he goes on immediately to set forth the attributes of winter. The whole passage is eminently beautiful and poetical:—“God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great

things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work. Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind; and cold out of the north. By the breath of God frost is given; and the breadth of the waters is straitened." (xxxvii. 5—10.) Well then indeed might Thomson, the Poet of the Seasons, catching something of the spirit of the Bible poetry, exclaim,—

"Vapours, and clouds, and storms,—Be these my theme,
These! that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heav'ly musing!"

"Heavenly musings" are perhaps better cherished by the gloom of winter, than by the sunshine of summer. When all nature is bright and fair, we are apt to make a heaven of earth; but when the elements frown upon us, and desolation seems to ride upon the blast; when the rattling hail, or the drifting snow, compels the peasant to seek the friendly shelter of his home, then indeed it is hardly possible for us if we have any serious thoughts not to indulge them freely. Our minds, sickened, as it were, with the gloomy aspect of all things around us, are in a condition to ascend to the contemplation of that God whose wrath, like a destroying hail, shall at last sweep away all man's "refuges of lies," and who has provided for his righteous family a secure retreat where there are no storms—no Winter—but one eternal sunshine of bliss in the green pastures beside the still waters of overflowing comfort. Considered, however, with reference only to the present world, Winter is a season which if not always agreeable

is highly necessary, not only to make us love the spring the better when it comes, and to operate both upon the mind and body with a salutary effect, disposing the former to reflection, and bracing up the nerves of the latter which might otherwise be too much relaxed, but more especially by fitting and preparing the earth to bring forth fruit in due season. The Agriculturist knows well the value of Winter, in mellowing and softening the ground for his future crops; and the Naturalist sees also other advantages in this season, as the rest of nature after the severe exhaustion of summer. It may be justly considered perhaps as the Sabbath of the year, in the benefits of which man and animals, and the soul itself, all largely share. Even the snow acts the part of a benefactor; not by the salts it contains as was formerly supposed; but by enwrapping the earth, as it were, with a warm garment, which reserves to it a large portion of heat, that would otherwise pass off from it and be lost. Hence we find the warmest spring generally follows the most intense Winter; and in North America, Norway, Russia, and the Polar regions, where the snow always lies on the ground for a regular interval, this result is uniformly experienced by a far more steady and rapid development of vegetation, than in our own climate.

Winter, therefore, is to be considered as a necessary part of that system of providential arrangement under which we live; and though nature may now appear to be idle, she is, as an ingenious Naturalist observes, busily employed. ‘Silent in her secret mansions, she is now preparing and compounding the verdure, the flowers, the nutrient of spring: and all the fruits, and glorious profusion of our summer year, are only the advance of

what has been ordained and fabricated in these dull months.'

Many are the reflections to which the observance of these things will give birth in every mind that is truly awake to any sense of gratitude to God, who thus in the system of nature displays himself as the same God, who, in the system of man's redemption, brings the greatest blessings out of the worst evils. The man who is disposed to murmur at the inclemency of the season, or at the loss of any of those comforts which belong to the other seasons of the year, should also reflect how far inferior his lot might have been, had it been cast in those more northern latitudes, where Winter almost divides the year, and reigns with a rigour which is here unknown. Let the discontented Englishman read the history of the Esquimaux, or of the inhabitants of Greenland, or Lapland, and he will then learn how to prize his own land, and his own temperate climate. Thanks be to God we never lose sight of the sun for months together as they do, and the comforts even of the poorest classes are wealth and affluence compared to theirs. They have moreover a moral winter resting upon their souls. "The Sun of Righteousness" has hardly risen to cheer them with his beams, and the mountains of ice, and snow, which shut them out from the rest of mankind, are but an emblem of the awful and deathlike coldness which surround their prospects of another world. How inscrutable, then, are the ways of God, that he should thus have taken some and left others! "How past finding out" are the depths of that love which has poured the light, and warmth of divine truth over favoured Britain, and has permitted so many other of the tribes of the earth to walk on

still in darkness, plunged, as it were, in all the horrors of a polar winter.

Much however is it to be feared that Winter is a season but far too descriptive of the spiritual condition of many in this land! What is the state of their hearts toward God? Are they not cold and barren as the season? What traits do we see adorning their profession? Or rather, it may be asked, are they not like so many bare and leafless branchess of the snow-clad forest, through which the gusts of pride and passion sweep with relentless fury, and upon which the dews and showers of gospel grace produce but the cold icicles of vanity, sin, and death? Are there not others whose profession is little better than a mantle of snow, beautiful and dazzling to the eye for a short time, but soon melting and vanishing away into its native element? And are there not to be found, in this age of religious romance, those whose splendid career has resembled for a time that famous palace of ice built by the Russian Empress, and sumptuously adorned—a gorgeous fabric while it lasted, and surpassing in beauty many more substantial ones—but destined, like some of the brilliant Church apostates of the day, to play a visionary part upon the religious stage for awhile,—

“A scene
Of evanescent glory; once a stream,
And soon to slide into a stream again;
Treach’rous and false; it smil’d, and it was cold!”

Blessed be God! all are not such. Many, we trust, there are in this Christian land, who will yet manifest their religious sincerity under every trial, and who will be found fruitful in every good word and work when that spring of religion appears, the dawn of which

seems already breaking upon the world. Let such rejoice that it was in the midst of a moral Winter that Jesus Christ appeared to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. Let them therefore at the present season, when the event of His coming in great humility has just been commemorated by the Church, look forward, as the Church directs, to that still greater period, when to those who look for Him, "He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

E. B.

THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES,
—AND FOUND—WANTING!

WHAT balance, O Lord God? We have nothing to lay in it! Our hope is in our Saviour's righteousness; we have accepted His offered mercy; we plead no merits but His; we put our trust in Him alone!

Assuredly, O Christian! if this be so, the balance is no longer employed to weigh thy fancied righteousness against the requirements of a strict and holy law: yet know, whoever thou mayest be that art truly Christian, there is a balance still pending wherein thou mayest be weighed. Now if thou be found—wanting? Thy salvation secured by the blood of Christ, mayest thou not be wanting in *degree* of holiness? Mayest thou not be wanting in diligence to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life, who alone was in no point wanting? Mayest thou not be found wanting in the attainment of the fruits of the Spirit—wanting in zeal for the glory of God—wanting in diligence for the edification of the souls of men? If not, what causes the difference between believers? Why do some main-

tain so holy and so close a walk with God, while others see Him distantly and indistinctly? Why do some glow with devotion, and others grope on step by step, as it were in gloom and darkness? Oh that this difference might rouse your sleepy souls—this sentence thrill upon your ears—and speed you on your onward course; lest with all the means of grace of which you have been taught to avail yourselves, you lead a low life here; in small degree promoting the glory of God; drawing few to His service: and fitted only for a low place among the mansions of the blessed—because—being weighed in the balances—you are found wanting!

PAX.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 277.)

THE DUTIES INFERRED FROM THE SUBJECT.

Thirdly, The subject of the text suggests matter of *duty*.

1. How should men *labour* to get into a state of grace! To get within the verge of Christ's commission into such a security which may at last bring them to an eternal triumph over death and hell! Security of estate, and security of person and interest, is the main intendment of men in the world. But security of soul is least in men's thoughts. Should not this latter be as seriously minded? Where there is a strong tower wherein they might be infallibly preserved in the time of hostile invasion, and be out of the reach of the enemies' battery, how greedy would men be to get under the shelter? Such a strong tower is the name of the Lord, and those that put their

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not but have some horror and chilness in his blood at the apprehension of what might be, if he had not that protection.

Neither do I discourage fears in ourselves, and fears of those things which may weaken our hopes of salvation. For those the apostle joins with a confidence in God. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which works in you both to will and to do." (Phil. ii. 12, 13.) Fear yourselves, but have confidence in God, a believing fear without an unbelieving jealousy of God's neglect of you. For all doubts of the stability of the covenant, and the perpetual tenderness of God, are brats of a natural pelagianism.

Breathe not your unbelieving fears in the face of Christ; it is a wrong to his commission, a desparagement to his Father's wisdom, as if he had placed so great trust in feeble hands; and a virtual accusing of God and Christ of the greatest falsity imaginable, whereby we make him more base and deceitful than the worst of men; an affronting the main tenor of the covenant of grace, and making the work of redemption to bear no better fruits than that of creation.

How languishing will be our love to God, while we have unworthy suspicions of him, that he should love us this day, and be an enemy to us to morrow? Can we love a man this day, that we fear will the next be our deadly enemy? Let the time spent in such jealous thoughts and complaints of God be spent in duty. Would it not be a trouble to a loving husband, to have his wife complain of her fears of his casting her off after the marriage-knot, and reiterated promises and assurance of his affection? Would she not better engage his affections by a performance of all offices of love and duty towards him?

RUTH'S CONVERSION.

JOHN iv. 28, 29.

Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The following particulars relate to the conversion of R. H——a, a female who was totally opposed to the truth, consequently to whatever exceeded the cold forms of religion. From a natural quickness and taste for arguing, she had obtained much head knowledge, and never felt at a loss for Scripture to uphold her *own views*, at which she since has shuddered, feeling *they were* leading her to the brink of a precipice whence the merciful arm of the Lord was extended in time to save her. Alas! how many walk in the pride of their own hearts; how few consider the warnings of their long-suffering God. “Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.” (Isai. l. 11.)

Previous to her conversion, Ruth lived with her husband at the town of L——r, where she was thrown into the society of the pious; one family of the highest respectability, struck with the extraordinary degree of scriptural knowledge she displayed for a person in her humble sphere, took much notice of her, and used many intreaties to induce her to attend a Gospel ministry, but all in vain. She did not understand that truth concerning the children of men, that “Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there

is none that doeth good, no not one;" not considering that the Lord pondereth the heart; a blameless walk satisfied her, and the anxiety of her friends seemed a troublesome delusion. One of them, whose attachment led her to persevere, at length prevailed. Business having called her husband from home, she had spent a tedious Sunday morning, and fearing to encounter the evening in solitude, and thinking that a compliance with her friends request would at least kill time, and undoubtedly furnish a subject for argument, therefore she summoned resolution to hear the minister so long rejected. The words of his text ("Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation") gave rise to a feeling of curiosity which was soon supplanted by that of awe. He dwelt strongly on the end of time; and so strong was the power of conviction on the mind it had never visited before, that the way of escape was, as it were, closed for ever. The once self-righteous spirit was fettered in a prison, whose strong holds were composed of sin; all she had committed from her youth up appeared set in array against her, and that insensibility, which drowns the culprit on hearing his sentence pronounced by the Judge, hardened her heart still more. How gladly would she have supposed he that spake mocked; (Gen. xix. 14) but a still small voice seemed to say, "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god like me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deut. xxxii. 39.) A sleepless night ensued, and many were the plans

resorted to next day, but all were vain; the world without was not equal to quell the tumult within: and the darkness which had hitherto veiled these overwhelming sins, could not be recalled; the idea that God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, (Eccles. xii. 14.) could not be overcome. Ruth did not venture to describe her misery to the person who seemed the means of causing it until the third day, when finding these feelings increase, notwithstanding every effort to subdue them, she disclosed the state of her mind to her anxious friend, who endeavoured to convince her the feelings under which she laboured were those of powerful conviction, at the same time imploring her not to stifle them, but to use fervent prayer. Then it occurred to her, for the first time, that she had never prayed, she knew not how. Nothing as yet softened her hard heart; sin was its malady, but there was no cure. Bitter was the suffering of a wounded conscience during the week; the end of time was ever before her, and the blackness of sin, but her mind was closed to more; no door seemed open for relief; that voice which even the dead shall hear might in a moment sound, and her heart in its natural depravity tremble before her God.

The following Sunday she consented to hear the same Minister. How strange and mysterious are His ways, whose Providence led her back for comfort to one she would gladly have never seen. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit; or whither shall I flee from thy presence." (Psalm cxxxix. 7.) "He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him and prospered?" (Job ix. 4.) Were every feeling of Ruth's mind described, a more accurate picture of it could not have been drawn than in the sermon

which first taught her there was balm in Gilead, from the words, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.) The burden she had borne was that of the heavy laden, of those to whom Jesus promised rest; and the Saviour until now concealed, was discovered so altogether lovely to her view, that sweet as the pure air to the weary inhabitant of a dungeon was that in which she first breathed the spirit of a pardoned sinner, and felt herself delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of a child of God. How slight were the sufferings she had undergone compared to the happiness in store. The tears which drowned her cheeks were so many drops of joy; and though her mind was incapable of the heavenly contemplations it has since been blessed with, she *rejoiced* to see herself a sinner saved by free grace, one who came to Christ *laden* with sin, *dismissed* with pardon.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE VERSE SYSTEM.

As many of our Readers may not have seen the Number in which this system is spoken of, we just remark, that it is a plan for uniting in going through the Scripture, by learning a verse a day, a practice in which above one hundred thousand persons, from all parts of the world, have united. The excellence of this plan seems to lie in two things—the committing the word of God to memory in a way so easy as to lie within reach of every one, and the common interest which it gives those engaged in it in each others welfare; it being understood that all pious persons will pray for all engaged in it, and especially that those

who have only a knowledge of the word in the letter may have its spirit written in their hearts.

Acts viii. 32, to ix 22. 1st Week's portion, v. 32 to 38. The Eunuch enquires the meaning of the Scripture he was reading. Philip's exposition of it. His profession of faith, and baptism.

Verse 34. We wonder not at the Eunuch's question. He was fallen upon a portion of Scripture of all others most difficult; a prophecy which, like all other prophecies, was only to be understood by its fulfilment; but of Jesus, as having fulfilled it in his own person, he had heard nothing. At Jerusalem, where he had been, these words were applied, as they are to this day, to Isaiah himself, Jeremiah, (Jer. xi. 19—21,) &c.

Verse 35. Philip in preaching Jesus from this text, would point Him out as that mysterious one who was "led as a sheep to the slaughter;" laying down his life of himself; (John x. 18) humbling himself by becoming obedient to the death of the Cross; (Philip. ii. 6—8.) like Melchisedec mysterious in his generation; (Heb vii. 3) an infant of days, and yet the everlasting God; violently taken from the earth, and yet he that liveth for ever and ever. How blessed are our eyes who see and know this.

Verse 37. The effect of the preaching of the name of Jesus upon him; he desires baptism as the ordinance of Jesus, (Matt. xxviii. 19); the seal and assurance of his interest in His salvation; the visible sign of his profession as renouncing all, whether Heathen idolatry, or Jewish legality, to put on Jesus, and "continue his faithful soldier and servant to his life's end."

Verse 38. On his profession of faith in Jesus, (a profession we have every reason to believe genuine Rom.

x, 10,) we rejoice to welcome him a member of the Church of Christ.

PRAYER.

O Blessed Jesus, we adore the depths of that love which made Thee a willing sacrifice—"Made sin for us that we might be made righteous in Thee." We praise thee that by thy stripes thy people are healed. O raise up many, like Philip, to exalt thy glorious name. May many, who with us learn thy Scripture yet understand it not, be brought to know the value of that only Name whereby they can be saved, and by the Spirit's blessed power be enabled to go on with us in our way rejoicing.

Second Week's portion, verse 39 to chapter ix. verse 5. Philip leaves him; the Eunuch goes on his way. Saul on the way to Damascus.

Verse 39. Our sorrow to part with our Ethiopian Brother is lessened by the assurance that he went on his way "rejoicing," as one of those who knew "the joyful sound." (Psalm lxxxix. 15—18.) Church-History informs us that he planted a flourishing Church in his native country.

Verse 1, 2. This High Priest was probably Caiaphas, who had so great a hand in the death of Christ, whose authority this persecutor desires to put to death His followers, contemptuously styled, 'any of this way.'

Verse 3, 4. 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity;' the Saints at Damascus at their wits end, through fear of Saul's rage, are suddenly delivered; and the slaughter-breathing persecutor permitted to reach the top of his rage; to approach the very gates of the city, is suddenly cast to the earth; and that voice, which just before had been raised against the saints, now enquires, "Who art thou, Lord?" "What hath God wrought!"

Third week's portion, verse 6 to 12. Circumstances attending Saul's conversion.

Verse 6. Persons under soul-trouble are glad to do any thing to get peace with God.

Verse 9. The arrows of conviction shot too deep to permit the common enjoyment of life, till some balm was found.

Verse 11. The Lord encourages Ananias to go to him, by telling him, "Behold he prayeth." Saul, as a Pharisee, had, no doubt, made many a long prayer before this; but in the judgment of Christ, he had never *prayed* before. Be assured you have never prayed, unless you have felt yourselves miserable sinners, and seen the want of Jesus as your Saviour.

Verse 13. Ananias hesitates about this new convert; talks of what he had been before, as if that were a reason why there should be no faith in what he was now; but oh, blessed be God, the hardest heart---the most darkened mind; all must give way before the power of Almighty grace.

Fourth week's portion, 16--22. Ananias comforts him; he is baptized, and preaches Christ.

Verse 17. Though Christ converted him immediately by himself, yet he is pleased to use Ananias to carry on the work. Happy they who under spiritual troubles have such guides as Ananias; yet God will find means to carry on his own work.

Verse 20. He only is qualified to preach Christ as the Son of God who knows, as Saul, His Almighty power by the work of grace in his own heart.

PRAYER.

LORD we praise Thee for that Almighty grace by which Thou didst subdue the persecuting Saul, and make him a Preacher of that Gospel whose light has shined even to us. O manifest thyself with the same power to many that still rebel against thy Gospel, and despise thy people. May there be many monuments of that power brought in from among those that unite with us in learning thy word, that we may join together at last to magnify Thee as sinners saved by grace.

POETRY.

THE NEW YEAR.

Thou coming year, what message fleet
 Attends upon thy hast'ning feet ?
 What is there in the lengthen'd scroll,
 Which thou wilt soon to us unroll,—
 Of time another sheet ?
 Is writ on thee or deeds of blood,
 Or judgment coming like a flood ?
 Or gentle peace, with balmy wing,
 And long dealt mercies wilt thou bring,
 Still granted of our God ?
 What summons do thy courses bear
 Of death ;—what cause of anxious fear ?
 What hast thou touching each to tell
 Of changes great,—of woe or well,
 To be another year ?
 It is not thus with curious eye,
 What God hath veil'd in mystery,
 That mortals weak should seek to scan ;
 And stretching out beyond their span,
 The future to descry.
 It is the creature's bliss to 'bide,
 Depending at a Father's side ;
 Yet one thing still this op'ning year
 May bid us in our mem'ry bear
 Of all that shall betide
 Christ only will make all things clear,
 And bright, and blest, and free from fear ;
 He is the Sun which still shall shine
 On the year's rise, and its decline,—
 Without Him all is drear.
 Have Him, and all shall work for well,
 Tho' seeming first of ill to tell ;
 All wafting to a glorious shore,
 And oftentimes tribulation more,
 Though by a rougher swell.

L. N. N.

Rev. H. A. Simcox, (Penkridge-Press,) Cornwall.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

or,

The County Parochial Visitor.

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THE STARRY HEAVENS.

"By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens."—Job xxvi. 13.

WHAT a spectacle of grandeur, glory, and mystery is presented to the observer of the heavens on a clear winter's night! Always splendid and sublime as this sight is, the frosty atmosphere causes every star to sparkle with even brighter lustre than usual; while the intense darkness which now pervades the firmament in the absence of the moon, gives a brilliancy to the whole scene greater than is perceived at any other season. In the East glows the noble sign of the Zodiac, called by Astronomers, the Lion. The West is enlivened by the presence of Jupiter, the largest of the planets, while higher in the heavens, and almost over our heads, glitter the lovely groups of the Pleiades and Hyades, forming part of the sign of the Bull, which is now also still more remarkable by the fiery aspect of Mars, the fourth planet of our Solar System.

But the most striking part of the heavens is the South, where Orion, with his glorious band of diamond-like orbs, blazes forth the most brilliant constellation of the heavens! Surrounded also as this constellation is with several others of great splendor, the beholder may now stand lost in admiration at the most magnificent view which the starry firmament affords, especially when he is told that it is visible to all the habitable world!

In looking round upon this gorgeous spectacle, we cannot wonder that the Almighty himself should have challenged the attention of man to it as one of the noblest exhibitions of his power and greatness;* and who can help being amazed when he casts his eyes again over yonder vast expanse which almost appears, to use Milton's expression, "powdered with stars?" more especially when he is informed by the discoveries of the telescope, that that luminous part of the heavens, called the 'Milky Way,' is a vast assemblage of stars, too small, or too distant, to be visible to the naked eye. The number of the heavenly bodies appears at first sight to confound calculation; and though science has numbered and arranged them, yet how is

* Job xxxviii. 31, 32. The expressions used here refer to the particular seasons of the year, when the sun rises about the same time as these signs. The 'Bands of Orion' are descriptive of Winter, as the 'Sweet influences of Pleiades' are of Spring; the latter of these signs is better known by the name of the 'Seven Stars,' and Orion is easily observed by the three remarkable stars usually termed 'Orion's Belt:' by the Arabians, 'Jacob's Staff.' Arcturus, perhaps, ought to have been rendered 'the Great Northern Sign,' i. e. the 'Great Bear,' commonly called 'Charles's Wain,' and sometimes 'the Plough.' Mazzaroth, according to Chrysostom, means the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and our marginal version adopts this explanation.

the imagination even of the wisest lost and bewildered at the thought that each of these sparkling points are in reality suns, glorious, vast, and, no doubt, beneficial as our own.

When we stretch the mind to such contemplations as these, (and surely there is no rational being who has not thought on this subject at some time or other,) we may well be filled with astonishment at the power of that Divine Word by whom these worlds were made: who "telleth the stars by number;" who calleth them all by their names, and who marshals their shining hosts with the same ease as a skilful general directs the movements of a mighty army.

The 19th Psalm is an evidence of what "the man after God's own heart" could think and feel on such a subject; and when he observes, that "they have no speech, nor language, and yet their voice is heard," he utters a paradox as beautiful as it is descriptive of the effect which the Starry Heavens have on all ages produced upon mankind. The very circumstance that men have in many countries adored the sun, and the moon, and the stars; and that this was the earliest species of idolatry, is a proof of the admiration which these attracted, though it serves also to shew the dreadful proneness of human nature to lapse into error and guilty superstition, and to pervert to sinful purposes even those things which most clearly display the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator. The same may be said of that depraved fancy of the Greeks and Romans, which imagined many of their favourite heroes and kings to be transformed into stars and constellations. But, surely, we are hardly less guilty if we neglect these heavenly luminaries, which might, if rightly reflected upon, shed much light upon our souls, and

beneft us even far more than they can do by the rays with which they enliven and adorn the night. They were created, as the book of Genesis tells us, among other purposes for that of being signs; signs not, indeed, of earthly events, as our superstitious forefathers supposed, but rather of the Creator's boundless power and skill who has placed them where they are to raise our thoughts to Him as the "Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift." Hence, as the Psalmist observes, "The heavens declare," (or, as the original implies,) "the heavens are distinctly telling,"* i. e. in every star, the glory of God. They are the most evident signs and tokens to all of his glory as a Creator; of his Majesty as a Sovereign; of his Power as a Preserver. For what are the laws by which so many burning suns and ponderous worlds are prevented from rushing against each other, and rendering the universe a scene of ruin and conflagration, like that which it shall really become at the last great day, when the stars of heaven shall cast themselves to the earth, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll? (Rev. vi. 13.) In looking forward to that tremendous period, so clearly foretold in the book of God, we see the subserviency of all the purposes of the Almighty to his moral glory. It is the connexion of yonder shining worlds with the destiny of immortal beings, that gives them an interest far higher than the mere astronomer can entertain for them, who gazes at them with his telescope, and computes their motions with the greatest accuracy. The Christian's privilege is to see, that

"Eternity is written in the skies!"

* This is the exact meaning of the original, as the words printed in italics in the ordinary version shew.

and that the most profitable lesson he can read there, is the value of that soul which must live in happiness or misery,

‘When like a taper all these suns expire !
How forcibly then does the Poet of the ‘Night Thoughts’ exclaim,—

‘Knowst thou the value of a soul immortal ?
Behold this midnight glory : worlds on worlds !
Amazing pomp ! redouble this amaze ;
Ten thousand add ; and twice ten thousand more ;
Then weigh the whole ? One soul outweighs them all !’

“As one star differeth from another star in glory, so is the resurrection of the dead.” This is St. Paul’s inference from the scene now before us: and a high consolation it is if we have a well grounded hope, that we shall shine even as a star of the fifth or sixth magnitude in the kingdom of our Father. One thing, however, is certain, that as we are naturally dark and benighted, “He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,” must shine into our hearts to give us the knowledge of his glory in Jesus Christ, before we can become “light in the Lord.” Christ himself is “The Day Spring from on high;” “The Bright and Morning Star;” (Rev. xxii. 16) nay more, “The Sun of Righteousness with healing under his wings;” (Malachi iv. 2,) enlightened and guided by his word of truth, we are enabled to direct our way with more comfort and safety through the wilderness of time than the ancient mariner could steer through the ocean, or the Arab through his sandy desarts, by the aid of the stars. And the end of our mortal pilgrimage if thus pursued will be an inheritance among the saints in light; a mansion of glory above; from whence we shall be able to look down upon those

shining worlds that now attract our attention upwards, and behold them, perhaps, but as the glittering gems that sparkle on the footstool of the eternal God, or as the gloriously bespangled curtain of that heavenly temple, within which sits enthroned the uncreated Majesty of Him "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." E. B.



THE FLY AND THE CANDLE.



It was an autumnal evening and the cold damps of a country residence reminded me of the approach of winter. The shortened day had compelled me to light my candle, but I had not as yet indulged in the comfortable and cheerful acquisition of a fire. The October blast had scattered somewhat unceremoniously the falling leaves, and by its howlings through the lofty trees which surround my dwelling, betokened a gale; in addition to this, the rain had begun to pelt

furiously against my window. The combination of these outward and inward circumstances had insensibly produced a feeling of desolation, and I was led to meditate on the ravages which sin had made. When lo, one of those flies, with long legs and wings, which are commonly denominated ‘Daddy Long Legs,’ attracted my notice. It had already made several circuits round the candle, and at last fairly threw itself into the flame. After struggling for some time, with difficulty it effected its escape, not however without loss of limbs; yet, notwithstanding its legs were somewhat shortened, its wings appeared uninjured: at any rate it took flight, and I did not see it again for some minutes. I had, however, scarcely ceased wondering at the folly and insensibility of the fly, when the little creature again presented itself to my notice. I soon perceived it had not learnt wisdom by its former burnings, for its whirlings and turnings round the candle seemed, if possible, swifter than before, as if it possessed no small degree of recklessness of life. Again, it had several narrow escapes, but again it flew swiftly to the evil, till at length, being tangled and overcome, it perished in the flame.

And now that I had witnessed its end, my wonder was raised that it should voluntarily have preferred danger to safety; and after so many hair breadth escapes, should have perished at last. Surely, methought, there must be some strange infatuation; a seeing of things in their wrong light, which could have tempted to so desperate a deed.

Yet, alas! is there not here a lively representation of scenes which are constantly occurring in real life? Do not the generality of men voluntarily choose death

rather than life? They do so, not that they have any desire to be consigned over to everlasting woe and misery, but because they will not keep themselves out of danger; because they will not come to the Saviour that they might have life. Besides this, the ways of sin are hard and dangerous ways, and poor sinners sooner or later are made to feel they are so: whereas, "The ways of the Lord are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace." How then can we account for their strange conduct, conduct which in natural things would be esteemed the height of folly. We open the Bible, and find their conduct is the result of a *strong infatuation*. The God of this world hath *blinded* the minds of them that believe not. He causes them to see things in a wrong light and character; and hence we see poor sinners flying as willingly and eagerly from everlasting life, and rushing as recklessly towards the fire never to be quenched, as the fly did from safety into danger and death; and this too in the face of warnings, and with a full sense of their sufferings. The world, the flesh, and the devil, allure them to the brink of destruction; here they are scathed by the fire from the bottomless pit, but all to no purpose; they drive furiously and headlong on into that hell from whence there is no retreat.

Oh consider this ye lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God! You are hurrying on ~~you~~ know not whither! Take warning by the poor fly! Thrust your fingers into the candle! Try the pain of burning but for a moment! Methinks you shrink back from the experiment. Oh that you may shrink back as instinctively from the fire never to be quenched; from the fire which will not burn merely one part, but every part of the body.

Who among you would hazard the torments of Hell, for a few short years spent in falsely-called pleasure and sin? Who among you is able to abide the fierce indignation of a sin-hating God? Would you avoid these? Hear from an ambassador of Christ the way. Look unto Him (even Jesus) whom you have pierced with many sins. Come unto Him who says, "Come unto me." Seek Him while he may be found; call upon Him now, while He is yet near. Get by faith but one glance of Him who died for sin! Rest upon the Cross! And so sin, the cause of all misery and ruin, shall not be your ruin; you will be rid of your infatuation; you will be safe for time; you will be blessed throughout eternity.

WATCH-WELL.

RUTH'S CONVERSION.

(Continued from page 20.)

Oh that all, like Ruth, could see their need of a Saviour; their necessity for washing in *that fountain* opened to the House of David, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. Can any say, I require it not? "Who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. xx. 9.) Not one. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.) Ruth's feelings presented a striking contrast this night to the preceding Sabbath; all within was peace; she kept these things, like Mary, and pondered them in her heart. The burden was removed from her mind, which was preparing for a greater fulness of joy. Jesus, who has promised "if ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it," (John xiv. 14) beheld the soul of this humble child ascending to him in prayer, and permitted her who felt

herself dust and ashes, to look forward to the bright glory of Heaven—to those blissful realms which he left to suffer death upon the Cross, the just for the unjust—as the future habitation of her unworthy soul. Her foot was placed upon a rock, from which it can never be moved; her soul warmed with a love from which nothing can separate it. (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) Soon after this happy change, a temporal change took place, which caused Ruth's removal from L——, a place she much loved, as there she was received into the family of God. It gave her some pain to leave the sweet Christian communion of which she was now a member, to return to her native place, the scene of many years spent in forgetfulness of God; but He who was her refuge did not withdraw his everlasting arms, and his love still warmed her in the cold atmosphere of the world into which she was unavoidably drawn. Humble as her station in life was, it was not too humble to serve her God. There is no situation in which we may not live to his glory; none in which the improvement of the talent will not be looked for, and no creature to whom a talent is not given. Her native village was without a Sunday-school. There the young used to violate the Sabbath in a remarkable manner, being remote from the parish Church, and from the fear of Almighty God. In the little institution Ruth established, which has increased to a large school, they now learn the fear of the Lord, and are directed by one who feels herself plucked as a brand from the burning to the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, and whose precious promise to those who follow Him is, “And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” (John x. 29.)

M——y.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 16.)

(4.) Let not this doctrine encourage any *remissness* in our known duties. Let none encourage themselves to a freedom in sin, and presume upon God's preservation of them without the use of means. No ; the electing counsel upon which this victory is founded, chose us to the *means* as well as to the *end*. He that makes such a consequence, I doubt whether ever he was a Christian. I may safely say, that any person that has a settled, resolved, and wilful remissness, never yet was in the covenant of grace, since that promises such a fear of God in the heart which is incompatible with a resolved laziness in duty. It is a new heart and a new spirit, not a lazy heart, that is the intendment of the covenant. The same will which is the seat of grace, can never be the settled seat of the neglects of God. God has promised a victory ; but the very promise of victory implies a war, and commands, as well as encourages, a standing to arms. Victories are never gained by sleep and laziness ; camps may be beat up, and throats cut, if guards be neglected.

He that is not under the influence of the doctrine of grace, never had the truth of habitual grace in him. He that has not learned the lesson which the grace or gospel of God teaches, to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*, &c. (Titus ii. 11, 12,) was never any proficient in Christ's school, never had any work of grace. It is the nature of grace to be active. It is a divine principle ; carnal security a diabolical ; darkness and light cannot blend together in intense degrees ; Christ and Belial cannot shake friendly hands. Security is never the effect, but the disease of grace, the death of holiness, and the life of sin. That grace which

assures us to the end, will make us conscientiable in the means to attain it. A partial security is also very dangerous in a Christian. It will kill our comfort, though it may not destroy our souls. It will impair the beauty of grace, though not its being. Would any but a madman, under a distemper, neglect the means to restore his healthfulness because he were sure to live so long a time?

(5.) *Admire* the grace of God. How much are we beholden to the grace of God which is at an hourly expense upon us? As his providence is called a continual creation by the efflux of his power, so our preservation in the new state is a continual regeneration by the influence of his grace. God in giving thee grace, hath given thee more than if he had given thee all the glory of the world. All other things are managed only by a common providence, this is put more immediately under Christ's charge. By giving thee this, which is a peculiar part of his commission, he hath given thee such a guardian, such an advantage which could never have been gained by a confluence to all the honours in the world.

It is a standing miracle in the world, that all the floods of temptations should not be able to quench this little heavenly spark in the heart; that it should be preserved from being smothered by the streams of sin which arise in us; that a little smoking flax should smoke and burn in spite of all the buckets of water which are poured upon it. To see a rich jewel in a child's hand, with a troop of thieves about him snatching at it, and yet not able to plunder, would raise an astonishment both in the actors and spectators, and make them conclude an invisible strength that protects the child, and defeats the invaders. Thus God

perfects his strength in our weakness, and ordains matter for praise in the mouths and hearts of babes and sucklings.

(6.) *Acknowledge* thy standing and thy present victories only to be by the grace of God. Give the grace of God its due praise. God hath fixed our standing in Christ, and intrusted and charged him with our preservation, that grace might triumph in the whole christian pilgrimage, till we come to the land of rest ; that nothing may be heard either in heaven or earth, but the acclamations of *grace, grace*. “God put no trust in his saints ;” (Job xv. 15.) in some other person therefore as the head of them. The ground of our perseverance is not in ourselves then, since God puts no trust in us, but in another—in the Mediator.

We cannot beat men too much off from themselves ; and therefore to strengthen this, take these propositions. [1.] Grace in its own nature is not *immutable nor independent*. Immutability is not intrinsical to grace ; neither is it, nor can it be, the essential property of any creature, though never so high. It is a natural perfection belonging only to God. The habit of grace is called an *incorruptible seed* ; not that it is so in its own nature, for it is a creature, and therefore defectible ; for mutability is as much belonging to the essence of a creature, as immutability to the essence of God. As it is impossible God should be mutable, so it is impossible a creature should be in its own nature immutable. But grace is immortal in respect of that omnipotent power which attends the principle, and spreads its warm wings over it, as the Spirit over the world, to bring it to a perfect beauty and order out of the chaos.

(*To be continued.*)

MEANS OF CHRISTIAN ADVANCEMENT.

(EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.)

THE following letter, received from an unknown Christian Friend, seems so likely to be useful to all whose eyes are in any degree opened to the value of good counsel, that I am inclined to venture, though without the knowledge of the writer, to take this opportunity of extending the benefit designed for myself. If good to one soul be the result, I shall not fail of forgiveness from the respected individual, with whom I may seem to be taking an unwarrantable liberty, should this meet his eyes.

— Your mind appears to have been exercised as mine has been on this subject. It is indeed as blessed a thing to the inner man, as it is hard to the flesh, to live to him who has died for us ; and it is as destructive to the peace of the new creature, as it is pleasing to the man of sin, to live to ourselves. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) Let the weed of your garden flourish, and what is the state of its neighbour plant ? But though we may not have it in our power *entirely to pluck up its root*, yet let us seek to destroy even the root in all its secret branchings, and at the same time, to cultivate the fragrant and beautiful flower. The implements of destruction for the weed of our old nature, seem to me to be closet communion, closet confession of the springing up of even the smallest bitter root. I would say, with the simplicity of a child to go and confess (however simple the words may be) to our holy, heavenly Father, the very smallest sin in thought, we may have discovered in our straying mind. (See the exhortation of St. Paul to the Corinthians, when they partook unworthily of the bread and cup of the Lord. 1 Cor. xi. 28, 32.) It

may be useful to us in every sin of thought, word, or deed, because it leads us to self-examination and self-judgement. And whatsoever we undertake by the grace of our God to cultivate the plant in us of the Lord's right hand planting, tends also to the up-rooting of the contrary principle ; the blood of Jesus Christ sustains the one to the destruction of the other ; the word of God, which is the sword of the spirit, protects the one and cuts off the other. Prayer in general, and especially secret communion with God, and also (when the Lord allows it,) communion with the true people of God who have a willing heart to know and exhibit the mind of Christ, this is the atmosphere in which this blessed production of our God grows and flourishes, and is made very strong. The Lord giving us the grace to seek these favors by prayer and every other means, we are sure to have them. There was a time when I had hardly any Christian communion ; saw nothing of Christian union and the like ; I earnestly asked, and the Lord graciously gave. Not that I consider we have as yet attained to any thing, therefore we ask for more, much more, and *much more!* we shall HAVE. Still we can praise his name for what he has done for us. Our great object in looking back on past mercies past attainments, and the like, should be to sing a loud Hallelujah ; then we should press forward and expect more. We may not linger as if we had attained ; the present attainment is not a suitable subject for the improvement of the present moment, nor will the mercies of to day suffice for the morrow. In this respect here is I think the believer's motto, "Hallelujah" for the past, and "onward" for the future.

— You complain of your ignorance of the

word of God, this too is my complaint ; but we must not I find spend the time in reflections on our diseases, it is a happy thing, a very happy thing, if we are made sensible of them, then it is our wisdom to betake ourselves to the kind Physician ever ready to administer to our need and to heal us ; there is balm in Gilead still, and *there* is the Physician.

— ‘I have often been struck with the fact recorded by, I think, one of the Fathers, that the children of the Jews in former days (being brought up according to Deut. vi, 7.) could give an answer verbatim to any of the most difficult questions put to them, even from the Chronicles. How obedience to this command in Deuteronomy by the Jew to his children shames us Christians, who are ashamed to mention the name of Jesus in the *streets*, and by *the way*, and almost in our *houses* to one of our children, lest we should be heard. And again, how have we, at least, for the most part, been spending our day time, reading other books, or our morning unnecessarily in our beds. How intent our Lord was in doing his Father’s business, (Mark iii. 20, 31—35, iv. 1. see Luke xxi. 37, 38.) ‘day time,’ ‘night,’ and *early in the morning*. But the thing which presses just now most on my mind is my shameful neglect of making every morning the sabbath of the day, knowing as I do, from the little experience I have had, the rest, the peace, the blessedness which Jesus gives in and after this quiet communion with him. Let us give two hours communion with our Lord in the morning, when we need fear no interruption, reading, meditating and praying ; and we may boldly ask with a full assurance of a gracious answer, that we may grow in grace, and in *the knowledge* of our God.

'This is what we want, a knowledge of our God as he reveals himself in his word, trusting to the teaching of the Spirit, who is promised to all who ask him. We want an acquaintance with our Father, and our Elder Brother, and our Teacher, (Job xxii. 21.) see also the remaining striking verses. Oh ! for a knowledge of my God ! How my heart in its thorough ignorance of him, (save that as I do know him as my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Friend) pants after it. What a savour in this knowledge, what light, what life, what wisdom, what love, what pureness, what zeal, what joy, what peace. Pray over as you meet with them in your reading, Eph. i. 17. Phil. i. 9. and iii 8, 10. 2 Cor. iv. 6. 1 John iv. 8. 2 Peter i. 8.

-----'I was very much struck with the consideration a little while ago, that two hours taken from our time of sleep would give us in the course of the year a full month's communion with the Lord—a month without night—in twelve years a whole year, and so on. Closet communion gives us an intimacy with our gracious Lord, our King, Prophet, Husband, Friend, which no other kind of communion can give. We see as it were our Jesus face to face, and get more and more to love him, more and more to be like him.—May you have grace at once to unburden yourself at his feet.'

YOURS IN GOSPEL BONDS.

AN ADDRESS TO CHILDREN.

My dear Young Friends, who, through the good Providence of God, have been spared to see the commencement of a New Year, pause for a few moments seriously to consider the question the Lord put to Adam, "Where art thou?" "Where?" In what condition? Are you still in a state of nature, loving the

world, and the things of the world? or have you been led by the Holy Spirit to "remember your Creator in the days of thy youth?" Every word of the Scriptures has its weight! "Where art thou?" not, where *hast* thou been, for "*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" consequently, all have walked in the broad road that "leadeth unto death;" but a *few* listen to and obey the Lord's gracious invitation, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" Reader, are you among that few? Nor is the question "where *wouldest* thou be" when death overtakes you? (all people would *like* to be in heaven,) but "where *art* thou" now? Are you *now* "in Christ," "the *way*," the only way to heaven, for "*this night* thy soul may be required of thee!" Nor does this Scripture allow of application to others. "Where *art thou*?" O Reader? Christ has given you an invitation to come unto him! He has invited "the little children," and yet many such, who are even receiving a religious education, think *when they are older* they will pray to Him to receive them. If a great man offered a helpless child his protection and friendship, we should call him a foolish child to say, I am too young to receive them, when I am older, I shall be glad to benefit by your kind offer. It is a solemn thing to die! How many parents have laid their children in the grave since last New Year's Day! and before the next, the grave clothes may be wrapped about you. My young friends, if you are Christ's, death will only be His messenger to take you to Him; but if the angels in heaven have not rejoiced over your change of heart, you will be "cut down as a cumberer of the ground," and hear Christ say, "depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!"

THE VERSE SYSTEM.

FEELING that it will give a greater interest to the Verse System if our notice of it be of the verses of the *present* month instead of the *past*, we pass over the greater part of the verses for January, that we may give you those for the present month, only going back to a few of January, that we may preserve the history of Cornelius entire.

Remaining verses for January, Chap. x. verse 1—10. Cornelius ; his character ; vision ; commanded to send for Peter ; Peter's vision.

Verse 1. A Roman Officer commanding a band, or company of Italian, *i. e.* Roman Soldiers, quartered at Cesarea. His surname, Cornelius, shews him to have been of noble family.

Verse 2. Perhaps Cornelius's state of mind is set forth by Psalm cxi. 10, and John vii. 17; an instance of one living up to the light which God had been pleased to give him ; affording genuine evidences of that preparation of heart which is of the Lord, by his regard for God, personal and family; love to man, in giving alms alway ; and his enquiry after further light, in praying to God alway.

Verse 3. The ninth hour, according to the Jew's mode of reckoning time, answers to our 3 o'clock, was the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, Exod. xii. 6, as afterwards of Christ the true Paschal Lamb, Matt. xxvii. 46, Luke xxiii. 44—46; was one of the stated times of prayer, Acts i. 3; and devout men, who had not an opportunity of being at the temple service, would still observe it in their families or alone, as Psalm iv. 17, Daniel ix. 21 ; while thus engaged directing his prayer unto God, and looking up, he receives the an-

swer directing him how to attain the further light he needed, in order to his salvation. Acts xi. 14.

Verse 6. There was something to be done then in order to his salvation, even to believe in Jesus Christ, whom Peter was sent to manifest to him. Mark, then, his fear of God was but a preparation of heart in order to the receiving Christ; so that those who put their prayers and alms instead of Christ, shew that they are ignorant of what they ought to do to be saved.

Verse 7, 8. Happy Cornelius, who had his household-servants, and a devout soldier, who could understand a business of this kind; doubtless, he had adopted David's determination, Psalm ci. 6. See also Prayer Book translation. And I would bear my testimony to every Christian head of a family, who may feel the importance of it, or desire to do so, that since I have been enabled to take the Psalmist's words and act upon them, I have experienced more blessedness than man's tongue can describe; and have learnt to know something of the meaning of words so frequently used to describe Christian families of old, but alas! of so small application now in general—"the church which is in thy house;" (Coloss. iv. 15.) something of the meaning of words which Cornelius was now to learn the full value of—"There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Verse 9. The Lord meets Peter in prayer to prepare his mind for the new work given him to do, the admission of an uncircumcised Gentile into the church; this hour of prayer was twelve o'clock; we should think it long to go from morning to night without food, yet how easily can we go from morning to night without prayer;

by which the soul must be fed. Would it not be well if individuals, if families, had some stated hour at mid-day also to approach God ? or would half an hour be too much to sacrifice for God at so inconvenient a season ?

February, 1st. Week, v. 11 to 17, Peter's vision.

Verse 11, 12. In order to prepare Peter's mind, who, as a Jew, would feel, in point of conscience, a difficulty in going to an uncircumcised person; the following vision is shewn him, the end of which was to point out that all distinction between Jew and Gentile, so long kept up, according to the law of Moses, was now to be done away. This was signified by the vessel or sheet, being full of beasts and fowls ; clean and unclean meats ; a distinction which was intended to keep the Jewish people separate from the rest of the world.

Verse 14. Here was a trial of Peter's principle. While the law of Moses stood in force (and he was as yet ignorant that it was done away) it would have been forbidden fruit to him, hungry as he was, to touch.

Verse 15. His scruples are removed by the voice of God. He who appointed that law amongst others, in the childish state of his church, (Galat. iv. 3) repeals it in the fulness of time to make way for the glorious liberty of the Gospel, under which all such carnal distinctions of meats, &c. have vanished for ever.

O Blessed Lord, who hast brought to light the fulness of that Gospel in which every distinction of Jew or Gentile is done away, we praise thee for the blessedness of being one in Christ with thousands of thy Church in every part of the world. We pray that the learning of thy word together, may be an additional bond of union amongst all thy people engaged in it, under whatever name or denomination ; and oh hear the united prayers of all for the adding to our number out of those who are still wandering in Gentile ignorance, that they may partake with us in the experience of the power as well as the letter of thy word.

Second Week, verse 18—24. Cornelius's messengers being arrived, Peter, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, receives them ; they tell their errand ; he goes with them to Cesarea, where Cornelius, having assembled his friends, waits for him.

Verse 19, 20. Peter, slow in faith to receive this mystery—the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles—appears to have been chosen to reap this first-fruit of the Gentiles, in order to remove the prejudice of the believing Jews, who would more easily receive Gentiles when brought in by their own Apostle, whose prejudice had been as strong as their own, till the Lord thus removed it. In fact, Peter makes use of this on another occasion in his dispute with them. *Acts xv. 7.*

Verse 24. In the true spirit of the Gospel, Cornelius, unwilling to partake of the rich feast he expected alone, calls his kinsmen and near friends. It is both a lovely effect, and a blessed evidence of the power of grace, when it enlarges our heart in love and anxious desire that those who are near and dear to us may partake of the same spiritual blessings, and be near and dear to God.

Third Week, v. 25—31. Peter's arrival ; converses with Cornelius and his friends ; in answer to his question, Cornelius declares the reason of his sending for him.

Verse 25. Cornelius took him for something more than a common man ; some one commissioned with an extraordinary power from God, and offered him a kind of reverence or worship, (as St. John Rev. xix. 10.) which the Apostle rejects. God's true ministers would have their people remember, that however rich the Gospel-treasure, yet it is deposited in *earthen vessels*.

Fourth Week, verse 32—38. Cornelius continues his reasons for sending for Peter; Peter begins to preach Christ to them.

Verse 31. “Thy prayer is heard.” We may gather from this, that this message was an answer to prayer; and if so, we may suppose that it was sent up for further light into the way of salvation, which he felt his need of. This, with every other instance of grace, illustrates that text, “the path of the just is as the shining light which shineth *more and more* unto the perfect day.” Prov. iv. 18.

Verse 34, Romans ii. 2., and St. Peter’s own words when accused by the Jews of eating with persons uncircumcised, Acts xv, 9, illustrate this. His mouth had before been shut to a Gentile sinner, now God had opened his eyes to see that there was no longer with God any respect, to Jew more than Gentile.

Verse 35. The case of Cornelius illustrates this; as one fearing God and working righteousness he was accepted of him; that is, his prayer was regarded, according to Rom. x. 12, 13, yet a preacher of the Gospel was needed to instruct him in that faith whereby he alone could be saved. Rom. x. 14.

PRAYER.

O THOU, who didst send thine Apostle Peter to preach peace by Jesus Christ to Cornelius, we praise thee that thou hast not left us to grope our way in darkness, but by the same blessed name hast guided our feet into the way of salvation. Blessed Jesus, who art “Lord of all” thy family, extend, we beseech Thee, thy dominion amongst the thousands in every quarter of the world that join with us in learning this thy word. If any are seeking after thee in much ignorance, oh! send thy ministers to publish to them the glad tidings of Gospel light and salvation; if any are trusting in their prayers and alms, oh! shew them their false security; direct them to thine only name;—and let all that know thy salvation, give the praise to thee who hast loved them and washed them from their sins in thine own blood, and made them Kings and Priests unto God, even thy Father, for ever and ever.



PROSPECT OF THE HEAVENLY CANAAN.

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High."—Psalm xlvi. 4.

THERE is a river, from whose source
The gentle rills of comfort flow;
Lovely and peaceful is its course,
And consolation gliding through.

There is a land, surpassing fair,
Where Jesus fixes his abode;
'Tis consecrated first with prayer,
And sacred duties mark the road.

The faithful soul, the contrite heart,*
Fir'd by the Spirit's kindling ray,
Like Salem's cloudy pillar, mark
The dwelling-place of Deity.†

Through life's oft clouded, varied scene,
Faith gleams upon the pilgrim's sight,
Unfolds the prospect all serene,
The glories of the realms of light.

* Isaiah lvii. 15. + 1 Kings viii. 10. 11.

The Editor will be pleased to receive observations on the following article.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

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No. VI.

SEED-TIME.

MARCH may justly be called the seed month. The Sower now goes forth, and anxiously commits his precious treasure to the ground, in the full assurance that the vegetative powers of nature will reward him for his labour thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold. The operation of sowing is indeed simple and common; but does the husbandman ever stop to consider the inexplicable change his seed must undergo before his expectations can be realized? A moment's reflection will be sufficient to shew that the vegetation of seeds

is one of nature's wonders, or rather of nature's God: for, as an old writer observes, 'nature is nothing less than the order of the divine works.' Let us imagine, if we can, a man who had never seen this order exemplified in this particular instance, and he would be just as ready to disbelieve that plants and trees could spring from seed cast into the earth, as we are to calculate upon the certainty of the fact. What resemblance is there indeed between the future plant, and the seed from which it springs? How little could mere reason, without experience, venture to predict the result that follows from a few handfuls of grain scattered over the soil! What if we adopt the supposition of some Naturalists, and imagine that each seed contains the embryo, or image, of the future plant? What if it should be true, that the acorn is only the gigantic oak in miniature? How does this lessen the difficulty of understanding this natural miracle; and why may we not as well believe, with mankind in general, that the seed is only a seed, a mere rudiment or principle, which acquires by degrees all the properties and forms which it afterwards becomes possessed of. After all that might be said or written on this subject, St. Paul's conclusion is the best and wisest, "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." Interesting as it might be to understand something further of this mystery of the natural world, it is of more importance to remark the beneficial consequences of this operation, and to be thankful to that providential wisdom which so orders it that when a man has cast his seed into the ground, it springeth up and groweth night and day, he knoweth not how.

The practical use then to be made of this mystery, is to learn another lesson of dependance upon God. We have only to watch how much of the operations of vegetation the Creator still keeps, as it were, in his own hand, to have a forcible commentary upon that petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." Surely that man who does not draw near to God whilst engaged in those operations which especially require his blessing, and which cannot fail to remind him how many things must work together for his good, if indeed he obtains the end he seeks for, is more ungrateful and inexcusable than ever the heathen. They (to use the words of the pious Flavel) 'when they went to plough in the morning, laid one hand upon the plough to speak their own part to be painfulness, and held up the other hand to Ceres, the supposed Goddess of Corn, to shew that their expectation of plenty was from their supposed deity.'* But if in natural operations, we ought continually to remember who it is that giveth the increase, in spiritual things our duty is not less plain and striking. The success of the Gospel is compared by Christ to a grain of mustard-seed, "which is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, so that the birds

* The same excellent writer, remarks 'That it is to be feared many Christians lay both hands to the plough, and seldom lift up heart or hands to God when about that work.' He gives us also the following pithy anecdote, which we especially commend to the agricultural reader's notice. 'There was a husbandman that always sowed good seed, but never had good corn; at last a neighbour came to him and said I will tell you what probably may be the cause of it—you do not steep your seed. No truly, said the other, nor did I ever hear that seed must be steeped. Yes, surely, said his neighbour, and I will tell you how—it must be steeped in prayer.'—See *Husbandry Spiritualized*, chap. 9.

hearts, that it is not their own work, but God's gift, that they get there. Isaiah xxvi. 12. Psalm cxiv. 1. Eph. ii. 1 to 11. Phil. ii. 12, 13. 2 Cor. iii. 5. James i. 17.

5. It is a sin to judge rashly of the secrets of another man's heart: it is injustice to censure any one on mere suspicion, in whose conduct you can discover nothing but what is holy. God alone is the judge of the secrets of the heart, for he only is a just and true observer of what passes there. Matt. vii. 1, 2. Rom. xiv. 10 to 13. 1 Cor. iv. 3. 1 Cor. xiii. 4 to 7. James iii. 14 to 17, and iv. 11, 12, with ii. 12, 13, and v. 9. Psalm cxix. 1 to 13, 23, 24.

6. The law of Christ is the perfection of that love wherewith we love God and our neighbour; in the spirit of which it is said by the founder of the law, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." He has a good hope of the promises of God, who keeps the commands of God; he will not look in vain for the forgiveness of his own sins, who, for the love of Christ, pardons the offences of others. Luke vi. 37. Matt. xviii. 21 to 35. Luke xxii. 34. Eph. iv. 32. 1 John iv. 7 to 14.

7. O happy man, who loves God, loves his friend in God, loves his enemy for God's sake. He is the only man, that never loses any one that is dear to him, for all are dear to him in ONE, who never forsakes us till he is forsaken by us. 1 John iv. 19 to 21. Matt. v. 43 to end. Prov. xvii. 17 and 18, 24. Job xiv. 21 to 23, and xv. 12. 1 Peter i. 22. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

(To be continued.)

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REAL CHRISTIAN
AND A NOMINAL CHRISTIAN, CONCERN-
ING THEIR VIEWS AND FEELINGS OF SIN.**

The *nominal* Christian is blind to sin in himself, except in gross instances, and even for these he makes some allowances, or lays a part of the blame on his temptation. (Gen. iii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xv. 19-23. Luke xviii. 11.)

The *real* Christian sees more and more sin in himself as his light increases; he discovers sin in his heart and motives when it is not visible in his conduct; he perceives altogether that in his flesh dwelleth no good thing, but that it is tainted throughout with pride and self-love, the root of every possible sin: and he makes no allowance for any evil either of his heart or life. (Ps. xl. 12. li. 3—5. Isa. lxiv. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 31. Rom. viii. 5—13, 18. Eph. v. 13.)

The *nominal* Christian has no desire to discover his own sins, or to become acquainted with his heart, but is satisfied with what he cannot help knowing of his own faults. (Ps. lxxxii. 5. John iii. 19, 20.)

The *real* Christian being convinced of his natural blindness and self-deception, desires earnestly to know more and more of his own character, and to detect his most secret sins, that he may humble himself for them. (Ps. xix. 12. cxlviii. 23, 24. Jer. xvii. 19. John iii. 21.)

The *nominal* Christian is apt to be offended if his sins are pointed out to him, and has too much pride and self-esteem to condemn himself. (Ex. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chron. xxv. 15, 16. John viii. 44, 48. Acts vii. 54. Prov. xv. 10, 12. Gal. iv. 16.)

The real Christian knowing that others may see faults in him which he does not perceive himself, is ready to condemn himself immediately they are mentioned to him. (1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Kings xxii. 19. Job xl. 4. Jer. xxxi. 19.)

The nominal Christian resists conviction without giving himself time for self-examination. (2 Kings viii. 13. Acts xxiv. 25. Job xxiv. 13.)

The real Christian seeks and prays for conviction, and endeavours to attain it at all times by self-examination and watchfulness. (Job xiii. 28.)

The nominal Christian is always ready to justify, rather than to suspect, himself in the wrong; and to charge his accusers with harsh judgment or unkindness. (Gen. iv. 13. 1 Kings xviii. 17. xxi. 20.)

The real Christian, knowing the deceitfulness of his own heart and his self-partiality, is afraid to justify himself when reproved, even if he cannot see his own fault, and is ready to suspect himself and to be thankful for every hint though it may be given with harshness. (2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12. Job ix. 20. Ps. cxli. 6. Matt. xxvi. 22. 2 Cor. vii. 8—11.)

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS. (1)

(Continued from page 37.) (12)

[2.] The same power that creates is necessary to preservation. There is little difference between creation and conservation; the one gives *prima esse*,* the other *parro esse*.† The wisdom and power of God is as eminent in the preservation and government of the

* The first being. † The continuance in being.

world as in the rearing of it. We are no more able to preserve grace, than we are to create it. We cannot preserve our own thoughts which are the natural products of our minds, much less so rich a treasure as grace which is purely supernatural, and in the midst of so many pirates which endeavour to rob us of it. As the first habitual grace is by the operation of God's grace in us, so the daily preservation of it is by his assisting grace, which in a sweet way, and yet efficacious, keeps grace in its station, and carries on the soul to further degrees.

As it is the preserving power of God maintains the world, so the auxiliary grace of God maintains grace and all the exercises of it in the heart, which could not else be kept up by all the power of men's wit or will. As the influence of the sun is necessary to all natural productions to the preservation and maturity of them; so is the influence of Christ necessary to all productions and preservations of grace. The righteousness whereby we are justified, and whence our habitual grace springs, is laid up in Christ, and our strength too; "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." (Isa. lv. 24.) Righteousness to justify us, and strength to preserve us; and as he is our Redeemer, laying thereby the foundation of the new creation; so he is our strength whereby it is preserved; "Oh Lord my strength and Redeemer." (Psalm ix. ult.) The former part of the psalm is by the apostle in the Romans applied to the times of the gospel. Our redemption and our strength, our righteousness imputed, our righteousness inherent, and our strength, are the effects of the same cause. So that we can no more be our own strength, than be our own redeemer.

ers, nor be our own strength no more than our own righteousness. When Paul complains of his temptation, God answers him that his *grace* should be *sufficient* for him. Not the habitual grace in Paul, but the assisting grace of God. (2 Cor. xii. 9.) Hence it is that the saints in scripture desire so often God to help them, which they need not, if their inherent grace were sufficient to preserve them.

[3.] The standing of those who are in their consummate state in glory, is only by grace as the chief cause. The good angels and blessed souls are confirmed in that state by a superabounding grace; for by nature they are mutable. Was it the contemplation of the face of God that kept the angels firm in that state? What is the reason some of the angels fell who contemplated God's face at the creation, as well as those that stood? Or is it that they see no good which they want, being advanced the highest of any creatures? Was not this the case of the fallen angels? What good did they want which was proper to a created state? Besides, confirmation is *positivus affectus*, a positive effect, and therefore must have a positive cause, a privative cause not being sufficient to produce a positive effect. Or do the good angels and glorified saints continue firm to God, because they know that if they sin, they should be eternally miserable? But this does not become a blessed state to avoid sin for fear of punishment, rather than love of righteousness.

Besides, the happiness of heaven could not be eternal, nor the joy pure, that is mixed with those fears of falling and losing it. Or is it from an affection to the pleasure of the place? Such a self-principle be-

comes not the purity of that state. But though their inherent grace, the contemplation of God, and delight in him, may be some means of their standing, and methods God useth, yet those are not sufficient of themselves. It is God in his incomprehensible grace which preserves them. It is an excellent speech of a holy man of our neighbour nation; *I am sure if my feet were in heaven, and Christ should say, Defend thyself, I will hold thee no longer; I should go no farther, but presently fall down in many pieces of dead nature.* If you can find one saint that in that place of glory ascribes the beginning or perfection of his salvation to himself, then glory in yourselves too. But not till then, and I am sure you never will.

[4.] If all this be true, much less can the best grace in this world preserve itself, because at best in itself it is weaker than its adversaries. No sooner is grace put into the heart, but all the powers of hell are in arms against it, and would murder the new-born heavenly nature. Now it being a creature weak and imperfect, it cannot be so powerful in operation as to resist the force of a stronger being, and a subtle and insinuating adversary. Were there no devils to assault, I do not understand how this principle, so weak in itself, were able to make head against the deceitfulness of our own hearts. It is the Spirit steps in to quell those destroyers, and brood upon his own work in the soul. What? Was it Peter's strength, or God's grace in him that made the difference between him and Judas? Between Paul and the rest of the persecuting Pharisees? It is from God's faithfulness that we are established and kept from evil; "But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you and keep you from evil." (2Thess.

iii. 3.) If God, not ourselves : it is true, we will, but God works that will in us. We work, but the grace of God works that work in us, and for us. If by grace we are what we are, it is by grace we do what we do, and that of God's good pleasure, not our merit. Our sufficiency is of God, not of ourselves. Our fruitfulness depends upon our abiding in Christ.

What can dust and ashes do against principalities and powers ? What man is able, without the grace of God, to wrestle with an experienced devil ? A smoking flax would quickly be blown out or expire after a little blaze, if God did not cherish it : a bruised reed would be trod in the dirt, if he did not secure it. A gracious man depends upon God, as the steel does upon the loadstone in the air, which if once separated, will be carried down with its own weight, and be reduced to a motion proper to its nature. If God should withdraw his grace from us, the grace in us wouold not preserve us from falling as low as hell ; for of itself it is far more insufficient to preserve us, than the strength which Angels and Adam had was to preserve them. We are preserved not by any inherent power in ourselves, but by the constant touches of God upon our wills, whereby he keeps our wills fixed to him.

Let not then our free will usurp the praise which is due only to God's grace.

There is great danger in this. To ascribe thy standing or victory to thyself, is an usher to some scurvy and deplorable fall. When we confide too much in ourselves, God leaves us to our own foolish confidence, to reduce us to our proper dependance on him. Peter's boasting of the power of his own grace, was a

just cause of his being left to himself, that he might be sensible of his own weakness, and the true ground of his security. If we do fall, it is not for want of faithfulness in God, but for want of thankfulness in us.

It is our sin. So much as we ascribe any thing to our own strength, so much we rob grace of its glory. We provoke the Lord to jealousy to usurp the praise due to God, who will not have the glory due to his name ascribed to the creature.

This is also contrary to our advantage. The acknowledgement of our dependency on God is the way to be preserved; the more we give God the glory of his grace, the more will he give us the comfort of it.

(To be Continued.)

THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

THE religion of Jesus Christ is a religion of peace, but it is also a religion of conquest. "I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Rev. vi. 2.) Such is the sublime opening of the visions of the Church of God, which St. John beheld in the isle of Patmos. The whole book of Revelation must be considered as a splendid figurative description of the trials and victories of Christ's Church from the first period of its history to the end of time. Let us transport ourselves then for awhile with the Divine Prophet, and endeavour to trace with a rapid outline the manner in which the Progress of the Gospel has been carried on, so as

to realize the truth of the prophecy which represents it to our imagination under the striking symbol of a



Warrior mounted upon his white horse, going forth with the "Kingly Crown" upon his head, and the bow of destruction in his hand,—Conquering and to Conquer.

Christianity began its triumphs at Jerusalem. Its first signal victory was the resurrection of its Divine Founder ; and with this event, the resurrection of the hopes of his followers, who, although amounting to no more than 120 at the ascension, had a wonderous accession to their number on the day of Pentecost, when 3000 were converted, and added to the Church. From henceforth, no longer confined within the narrow circle of Jerusalem and Judea, the Gospel spread itself widely and rapidly into all the neighbouring regions.

Under the labours of St. Peter and St. Paul, it soon afterwards penetrated to Rome, the very seat and throne of Gentile idolatry. Within less than fifty years after Christ's ascension, churches were founded not only there, but in all the chief cities of Asia Minor,—a fact to which the Epistles of the New Testament bear ample witness. Through the zeal of some of the Apostles, or their converts, societies of Christians were also established in the remote provinces of Spain and Africa, and there is reason to believe even in Britain and India. This wonderful propagation of Christianity took place before the fall of Jerusalem, so that the prediction of Christ, that “the Gospel should be preached in all the world, and for a witness unto all nations,” before he came to destroy that murderous city, was literally fulfilled. (Matt. xxiv. 14; Coloss. i. 23.)

But the Conqueror did not here pause in his career of victory over heathen and Jewish prejudice. On the contrary, this catastrophe seemed rather to open a wider field for the struggle. For though the bow of the Gospel now smote with a fiercer stroke, and its enemies stood appalled at beholding the most striking fulfilment of prophecy in the destruction of a city which was evidently condemned and cast off by God for its guilt, yet the enmity of the Gentile heart was every where more extensively stimulated to opposition and persecution, by the scattering abroad of the Jews throughout the Roman empire. Long and arduous was the struggle which the religion of Christ had to maintain with the forces that were arrayed against it. During 3 centuries, the blood of the Martyrs was almost continually flowing. Nevertheless, the Church still continued to advance.

Every fresh persecution beheld it rising with renewed glory from what its enemies had thought to be its ashes. Idolatry every where saw its temples thinned of their votaries, and the united band of Christian warriors still increasing their ranks, while in the distance of the picture, it beheld with astonishment, the Conqueror ever advancing upon them with his quiver full of arrows, and his bow still strung for the mortal combat. Notwithstanding all opposition, the provinces of the Roman Empire, both near, and remote from the capital, exhibited the extraordinary spectacle of a religion which was the sworn enemy of Paganism, advancing daily in the number and consequence of its professors. Every effort however, was used to suppress it. Cruelty exhausted its invention to shake the constancy, and to terrify the faith of the new sect. But all was in vain. From the demon-like efforts of a Nero in the first century, down to the merciless, and systematic decrees of a Dioclesian in the beginning of the fourth, the Church presented the same bold front of unconquerable firmness, and the world the same fierce aspect of determined, and malignant hostility to all who bore the Christian name.

But a change was at hand. The crown was at length to be struck from the head of Paganism. The year 312, A. D. beheld the humiliation of the enemy that had so long waged war with Christianity. The first monarch of the world—Constantine the Great—supernaturally warned, assumed the banner of the cross, and led forth his armies under the standard that was to give him the victory over his own enemies, and the enemies of God. From that period the Church was placed under the shield of the royal protection. And

before the end of the same century, the triumph of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire was fully come. . . From the Emperor Theodosius emanated a succession of bold decrees, which, "like successive flashes of light from the sword of the Spirit, smote the worship of idols, shut the heathen temples, and established Christianity as the religion of the Roman world,"

Thus indeed, did our Messiah in the power of his spirit, and his providence, ride forth in the first great age of the Church upon his "White Horse" of victory, to vindicate the honor of his crown : to make the nations feel the thunder of his bow; and the resistless force of his omnipotent arm. But other scenes of terror, and triumph were yet to follow ; another trial was to be encountered, of a different kind; and for other ends. The false prophet of the East, "the Angel of the bottomless pit," was to be permitted to send forth his armies typified by swarms of locusts, to ravage, and desolate a Church, which like Israel of old had departed from the true worship of God, in the hour of outward prosperity. (Rev. ix. 11.) The imposture of Mahomet was to overrun Europe, and Asia, and to subjugate for awhile that Church, and those nations which had relapsed into superstition, and idolatry. The Roman Beast also (Rev. XIII. 1.) with his seven heads, and ten crowns was to rise up from the sea of worldly anarchy, and for a time to make war with the saints of God, and to overcome them. The delusions of Popish superstition, were to overspread the world with thick darkness. All this was foreseen and permitted for the trial of the patience, and faith of the saints. The Church symbolised in the Revelation by a woman clothed with the sun,

and having the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (xii. 1.) was to be driven into the wilderness, for a period of 1260 days, or prophetic years. Still, however, there was a small band devoted to the service of Christ, even in the dark ages, who were ever ready to resist even unto blood. There were many scattered up and down in every country, who did not worship the beast, nor his image. (Rev. xii. 1, 11.)

(Concluded in our next.)

A WORD TO THE IGNORANT.

Is the ignorant soul such a slave to Satan? Let this stir you up that are ignorant from your seats of sloth, whereon, like the blind Egyptians, you sit in darkness; speedily come out of this darkness, and resolve not to go down to utter darkness. The covering of Haman's face did tell him that he should not stay in the king's presence. If thou livest in ignorance, it shows thou art in God's black bill; he puts this cover before their eyes in wrath whom he means to turn off into hell; (2 Cor. iv. 3,) "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." In one place sinners are threatened "they shall die without knowledge." (Job xxxvi. 12.) In another place, they "shall die in their sins." (John viii. 24.) He indeed that dies without knowledge, dies in his sins: and what more fearful doom can the great God pass upon a creature than this? Better die in a prison, die in a ditch, than die in our sins. If thou die in thy sins, thou shalt rise in thy sins: as thou fallest asleep in the dust, so thou awakest in the morning of the resurrection; if an ignorant, Christless

wretch, as such thou shalt be arraigned and judged. That God whom now sinners bid depart from them, will then be worth their acquaintance (themselves being judges;) but, alas ! then he will throw their own words in their teeth, and bid them depart from him; he desires not the knowledge of them. O sinners, you shall see at last, God can better be without your company in heaven, than you could without his knowledge on earth. Yet, yet it is day, draw your curtains, and behold Christ shining upon your face with gospel-light; hear Wisdom crying in the streets, and Christ piping under your window in the voice of his Spirit and Messengers,—“ How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity,—and fools hate knowledge ? Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you and make known my words unto you.” (Prov. i. 22, 23.) What can you say, sinners, for your sottish ignorance ? Where is your cloak for this sin ? The time hath been when the word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open vision, not a Bible to be found in a town or country ; when the tree of knowledge was forbidden fruit, and none might taste thereof without license from the Pope ; happy he that could get a leaf or two of the Testament into a corner, afraid to tell the wife of his bosom. O how sweet were these waters, when they were forced to steal them ! But you have the word (or may) in your houses ; you have those that open them every Sabbath in their assemblies ; many of you, at least, the offers of your ministers to take any pains with you in private, passionately beseeching you to pity your souls, and receive instruction : yea, it is the lamentation they generally take up, you will not come unto them that you may receive light. How long may a poor minister sit in his

study, before any of the ignorant will come upon such an errand! Lawyers have their clients; and physicians their patients: these are sought after, and called up at midnight for counsel: but, alas! the soul, which is of more value than raiment and body too, is neglected; and the Minister seldom thought on, till both these are sent away. . Perhaps when the Physician gives them over for dead, we must come and close up those eyes with comfort which were never opened to see Christ in his truth; or be counted cruel, because we will not sprinkle them with holy water, and anoint them for the kingdom of heaven, though they know not a step of the way that leads to it. Ah, poor wretches! what comfort would you have us speak to those to whom God himself speaks terror! Is heaven odys to give to whom we please? "Or is it in our power to alter the laws of the Most High, and save those whom he condemns? Do you not remember the curse that is to fall upon his head "that maketh the blind to wander out of the way?" (Deut. xvii. 18.) What curse, then, would be our portion, if we should confirm such blind souls that are quite out of the way to heaven, encouraging you to go on and expect to reach heaven at last, when God knows your feet stand in those paths that lead to eternal death? No! it is written; we cannot, and God will not, reverse it; you may read your very names among those damned souls which Christ comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on, who the apostle tells us, are such "that know not God; and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 8.) And therefore in the fear of God, let this provoke you, of what age or sex, rank or condition soever in this world, to labour for the saving knowledge of God in Christ, "in to know is life eternal." —Gurnall.

THE VERSE SYSTEM.

1st. Week, v. 39 to 45 ; Peter continues his sermon ; the Holy Spirit falls on his Gentile hearers, which astonishes the Jews.

Verse 41. The testimony of "all the people" would have been a weak witness to the truth of the Resurrection, because their knowledge of the person of Christ must have been very partial; but the testimony of these "chosen witnesses," who had such continual intercourse with him, placed the glorious fact beyond a doubt.

Verse 43. Isai. xxviii. 16 ; lili. 11; Jerem. xxx. 34; Dan. ix. 24; Zech. xiii. 1; Malachi iv. 2. These texts speak directly, but the whole of the Old Testament Prophets point out the same truths more or less clearly.

Verse 44. By comparing this verse with chap. xi. 15, it would seem that this first outpouring of the Spirit on the Gentiles was attended with the same visible signs as appeared on the day of Pentecost, in order to signify the equal distribution of Gospel privileges to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. In the faith of this, still does the Minister of the Gospel preach the same truths, looking up for the descent of the same Spirit who alone "giveth the increase;" an increase, he is remembered, which, though unaccompanied with the outward glory of such visible signs, gives not a whit less striking evidence of His glorious presence and Almighty power, in the deliverance of every individual soul from the darkness of sin and spiritual death into the marvellous light of the Gospel.

PRAYER.

O God the Holy Ghost, who by the outpouring of thy gifts and graces upon Gentile sinners, hast taught thousands in every age to magnify the God of their salvation, and dost still use the same

4th. Week; Verse 11 to 18. Peter continues his defence, whereby the Jews are fully convinced.

Verse 16, 17. Seeing that Christ had fulfilled his own words, and baptized these Gentiles with *his baptism*—that of the Spirit, Matth. iii. 11,—he could not withstand God in refusing to them *his baptism*—that of water. Perhaps he felt too the memory of the words in Matth. iii. 9, which have a spiritual application here, “*God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham*.”

Verse 18. Peter’s explanation of his conduct ends in the entire conviction of those who had, no doubt, conscientiously, though ignorantly, contended with him. In the striking overthrow of such violent prejudices on their part, as well as on that of Peter before, we see the mighty power of God, and exclaim, “*what hath God wrought!*” O blessed grant of unspeakable grace—repentance to us sinners of the Gentiles—“*thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!*”

PRAYER.

O Blessed Jesus, who art exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto all thy true Israel, Gentile as well as Jew, we acknowledge this mighty blessing as Thine own gift! We praise Thee for this grant of grace wherever manifested amongst us that are united in this Scriptural bond; help us to ascribe to Thee all the glory. And oh may that blessed gift be granted to those amongst us, who are still unacquainted with it, that those yet afar off, being brought nigh to Thee, we may gladly admit them into communion with us, to the praise and glory of Thy Name.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

or,

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THE RAINBOW.

'God's wond'rous bow of three celestial dyes,
Plac'd as a sign to man amidst the skies!'

THOUGH occasionally beheld at all seasons of the year, the Rainbow is peculiarly the ornament of a showery April sky. This grand and impressive object seldom fails to attract the eye by the beauty of its colours, or to awaken the mind to those scriptural recollections which are associated with it. The Son of Sirach, the Apocryphal writer of the book of Eclesiasticus, has shewn much wisdom by the manner in which he refers to this lovely specimen of the Creator's works: "Look upon the Rainbow," says he, "and praise him that made it; very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof; it encompasseth the heavens about with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it." There are but few persons who will not acknowledge the propriety of thus directing their attention to an object which is

at once so conspicuous and striking as to claim a tribute of admiration from all persons, whether young, or old, learned, or ignorant. How vast is the extent, how delicate the texture of its shadowy arch! How elegant in its form, and rich in its tinctures! but how much more delightful in its sacred significancy; for while the violet and the rose blush together in its beautiful aspect, the olive branch smiles in its gracious import. It writes in radiant dyes what the angels sang in harmonious strains, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

In a natural point of view, the agency of the clouds which produce the Rainbow so frequently at this season, is especially necessary to nurture and quicken the growth of those plants which are now beginning to germinate and spring up under the influence of warmer skies. All vegetable productions, like the young offspring of the animal world, seem to need a more fluid, or watery nourishment in their infancy than when in a more advanced state. Hence, the reason that Providence now accumulates in our atmosphere an abundance of moisture, which condensing, or becoming heavier than it is in ascending, falls in those genial showers which are so characteristic of the month of April.

The economy of the clouds, and the various means by which they are made to minister to the wants of nature, is a subject deserving of equal wonder and gratitude. Elihu alludes to it, in language that describes significantly how the process continually goes on under the divine management: "Behold, God is great; he maketh small the drops of water; they pour down rain according to the vapours thereof, which the clouds drop and distil upon man abundantly." (Job 36.

27.) But although all our readers know that the Rainbow is the effect of the falling shower, it is probable that many may be ignorant of the precise natural cause which produces so glorious an object. To understand this perfectly would require an acquaintance with one of the most intricate of modern sciences; for it is only since the laws of the reflection and refraction of light were explained by Sir Isaac Newton, that the science of optics, which alone can illustrate this subject in a satisfactory manner, has been fully understood. Suffice it, therefore, to observe here, that each ray of light consists really of the three, or, to speak more correctly, of the seven colours seen in the bow: and that these colours become visible to the eye by being reflected upon, and through the innumerable drops of a dense cloud opposite to the sun. Each of these drops thus serves as a cut crystal or prism to reduce the rays of light falling upon them to their most simple or coloured state, and hence they present the eye with an arch of coloured drops corresponding with the arch of the heavens.

We can hardly expect that by this description, many of our readers will fully understand all the causes which are concerned in producing the Rainbow. It is of more importance, however, that they should recollect for what reason this noble object was designed by its Creator. Like all the rest of his works, it had a fixed purpose, and was intended to be a sign and seal of his covenant with man to destroy the earth no more with the waters of a flood. (Gen. ix. 13—15.) Surely, therefore, we ought never to forget when we see it, that it is an illustrious pledge of the divine mercy and goodness, and is intended to confirm our faith and confidence in God. Other pledges and sym-

bols of this nature have had their use, and have passed away; but here is one designed for all ages, and one which is as fresh, beautiful, and as full of promise now as when it cheered the hopes of righteous Noah and his family more than 3000 years ago. In short, to adopt the language of an eminent modern poet,—

‘As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young its beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in its beam.

For faithful to the sacred page,
Heav’n still rebuilds its span,
Nor shall the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man.’

It is a vain enquiry whether the world before the flood had ever seen a Rainbow. The sacred narrative seems clearly to imply it had not. Many circumstances render it probable that the atmosphere of the earth underwent a great change by that dire event; and even if it did not, surely he who maketh the clouds his chariot, could have so regulated their appearances that they might never have exhibited the Rainbow. It is of more use therefore to enquire what was designed by the form of the Rainbow. As all the prophetic symbols have had a meaning, this would seem to have been intended as the bow of mercy, in opposition to those bows used in war, and in the chase, from the earliest times, which were rather weapons of wrath and destruction. The imagination of Noah and his posterity might in this bow well figure to themselves the noblest symbol of power, united with forbearance; the emblem of Almighty strength, divested of its fearful arrows of wrath, and no longer strung for purposes of hostility, but suspended in heaven as a potent war-

rior's trophy and token; being also adorned with the colours of anger and of peace, as if to denote at once the wrath of an offended God towards his enemies, as well as the eternal duration of his favor to all the repentant and believing sons of Adam.

If to Noah the Rainbow might have suggested thus much, may it not teach a still higher lesson to us? Is it not now the emblem or type of a new and better covenant than that which God made with his Old Testament Church? Such, assuredly, we may deem it on the authority of that sublime vision which St. John tells us he saw; (*Rev. iv. 2, 3;*) "I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and one sat on the throne; and there was a Rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." What, indeed, can here be signified but that covenant of grace with which the throne of Christ as a Redeemer is encircled, as it were, under the gospel dispensation? And what can convey a higher idea of that kindness which actuated him to deliver a lost world from eternal destruction, than the figure of an emerald bow. In nature the most refreshing and delightful of all hues is green, the colour of the precious emerald; and green is also a significant emblem of fertility and duration. Thus in the glorious object which St. John beheld surrounding the great Head of the Church in Heaven, we have a splendid token of that great covenant of salvation which contains within it every blessing for time and for eternity, which is ordered in all things and sure; and in virtue of which it is the duty, as well as the privilege of the believer, to look upward, and regard yonder celestial bow, not as an object placed there merely to gratify the senses by its peerless

beauty, but rather as a divine symbol of his Redeemer's love, and an earnest of future peace, triumph, and deliverance in the eternal world.* E. B.

THE POOR OLD BEGGAR.

A Poor Old Beggar knocked at the door this morning, and by one of those remarkable coincidences which the world calls chance, but which he who has learnt to recognize the wonderful works of God traces up with delight to the tender compassion and providential care of his Heavenly Father, I was standing in the passage with a dear friend in the Lord when his call was answered. There was nothing in his appearance which differed from that of the generality of persons of his class. He was evidently suffering from disease; his tottering limbs bespoke his weakness, and his tattered garments his poverty. He had in one hand a small bundle of matches, and in the other a hat stuffed with straw and rag in which he held the recommendation which he told us was to gain admission into an Infirmary in London, whither he was travelling from Windsor;

* The Rainbow is thus made the subject of a very pithy application by an old writer, which we shall give in his own language, of the year 1615; 'The Rainebow is taken as a figure of Christ; and therefore we are thereby taught, that when either the darke blacknesse of ugly sinne, or the thick clouds of grieve, and adversity, do threaten unto us any fearful overthrow, we should clap our eies upon our Rainebow Christ Jesus, and be assured that though that blacknesse of sinne be never so great, yet in him and by him it shall be done away, and never have power to cast us away; though those mists and fogs of adversity be never so thicke, yet shall they by him, as by a hote and strong sunne be dispersed and never able to drowne us.'—*Bishop Babington's comfortable Notes on Genesis.*

and he said, with emphasis, ‘I shall never come out again.’ When the question which naturally presented itself, ‘Whether he knew his need of Jesus, and whether he had a hope in him’ was put, I expected the answer common in such cases, but was delighted to hear him reply, ‘If I had no hope in him I should indeed be miserable; I am nothing, but my hope is in him.’ He was then asked how he had become acquainted with this precious Friend, and the account of him which follows is as nearly as I can remember them in his own words. ‘It was about sixteen years ago ; I was a wild young man, or rather a wild middle-aged man ; but one day I heard a sermon on the “great white throne” that was set, and a terror came upon me which I shall never lose sight of till I get to Heaven. For eight or nine weeks I was very unhappy, but one Sabbath morning the subject of the sermon was, “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” I said to myself, I am sure I believe as well as you, but yet I cannot believe that I am saved. I went home in great trouble. In the afternoon all my family went to a prayer-meeting. I locked the house as soon as they were gone ; sometimes I was praying with my Bible open ; sometimes I was walking up and down almost expecting that the earth would open and swallow me up : but it pleased the Lord to give me an answer, not as I expected. I expected that a voice from heaven, or a writing on purpose for me, would say, “ Thy sins are forgiven : ” but instead of this, my heart seemed changed ; I was enabled to rejoice ; for true is that word of God, “ The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one

that is born of the Spirit." Then his countenance lighting up with an expression of heavenly joy, he added, ' I can say with the Prophet, " O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou was angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." If I could have my hat full of gold, and my health restored, I would not exchange it for what he has given me ; yet how few know its value: I say not of the rich and great only, but even of the poor like me ! ' A question was asked to prove whether he knew the sanctifying power of the grace of the Gospel. ' A servant,' said he, ' may be a faithful servant, and yet he may have a tyrannical master: he obeys him, but it is from fear; it is only when he has learnt that his master loves him, that he obeys from love; there is no obedience like that which springs not from the fear of punishment, but from the love of God. I think St. Paul and St. James speak much of this obedience. And we have many trials, and they are painful, but they try our love; and that love which abides through them all is proved to be true, and God is love. A gentleman, or a poor man, may have *a great respect* for God, because he gives them food or clothes, but the love of God is only learnt at the Cross of Jesus.'

Afterwards he said, ' The enemy oft-times tempts me to believe that all this is a cunningly devised fable.' On its being observed that his strength was not in himself but in God, he answered, ' Oh no ; Peter said though I die with thee I will not deny thee, and yet he denied his Master. David, while he was keeping his Father's sheep, was a man after God's own heart, yet when he was raised to the throne, he was suffered to commit *great depredations* to shew him what was in

his own: and Paul, after he had been raised up to the third heaven, had a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure. *It is a hard thing to be a Christian;* but he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' He added, 'I had a great horror of the Methodists once, but it is all gone now, though I do not *acquiesce* with them in all things; I hold a free salvation, but I believe that if God has begun a good work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'

He was asked whether he had a Bible, and on his assurance that he possessed nothing but the clothes he wore, one was given to him. I shall never forget the way in which, raising it with both his hands, which could ill bear its weight, he exclaimed, 'We have direction-posts on the road to tell us the way to the next town, and how many miles to it. This is *my* direction-post—this is *my* guide.'

He said, 'I am sure I shall never come out of the Infirmary to which I am going; I shall not see you again, till we meet where congregations shall never break up, and where Sabbaths shall never end. God who searcheth the hearts knoweth who is sincere before him.'

The last sentence was uttered with a most peculiar solemnity of manner, and with the blessing of an aged saint, he left us. That we shall ever see or hear of him again, is scarcely possible; but we have beheld in him a proof never to be set aside, that the gospel of Christ is enough. *It is enough.* Without riches—without health—without earthly friends—without a temporal comfort it is enough. Blessed truth! and blessed be the Lord the Spirit who caused it to be so

in the experience of the Poor Old Man ! Assuredly, his Father which is in Heaven will not suffer one good thing to fail of all that he has been brought to believe, and he shall be his in that day when he shall make up his jewels.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that every circumstance of the anecdote here related is strictly true. The writer of this witnessed it this very morning.

January 19th, 1833.



THE CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLDER ON THE SABBATH.

MR. EDITOR.—It may be a useful way of enforcing practical religion to exhibit it not so much in a string of precepts, as by shewing its actual operation in the various duties of common life. Dismissing the rest for the present, I shall endeavour specially for the benefit of your agricultural readers, to describe the character of a Christian Householder on the Sabbath.

To a Christian, religion is the first object;—“he seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,” and therefore it is not out of the right order to make his coaduct on the Sabbath a matter of first consideration. Further,—the Christian looks at a due observance of the Lord’s day as, under God, the key to unlock the right performance of all his other duties. If the Lord’s day is not well and spiritually observed, he is quite sure nothing else can go on well.

I shall then, without further preface, proceed to describe the religious Householder’s observance of the Sabbath. While others almost neglect it,

he makes it a subject of his chiefest concern. Nor does he do so blindly. He will acquaint himself with the divine authority of the Sabbath. He will know where to find its first institution. Gen. ii. 2. He will have read other striking parts of God's word which enforce it, as Exodus xvi. 23; xx. 8; Numbers xv. 35; Isaiah lvi. 2; lviii. 13, 14; Jer. xvii. 24. He will know and rejoice in the reason why the seventh day was changed to the first, and, in memory of the resurrection, called the Lord's day. And being thus assured of its divine authority, and feeling its absolute necessity, not merely to refresh man and beast, but to keep alive religion in the soul, as well as delighting in what he esteems an inestimable privilege, he will prepare to observe it right heartily.

The Jews began their Sabbath on the evening before, which was "called the preparation," and the Christian Householder will have *his* preparation. He will, as far as possible, have things cleared away, and set to rights early on Saturday night; he will too, as far as possible, wind up all his worldly accounts, and divest himself of worldly cares, that he may with light and joyful heart keep holy day to the Lord. He will let fall a timely observation, perhaps, as he may see occasion, to the rest of his family, tending to keep up their attention to the coming solemnity of the morrow, and the peculiar blessing which may be expected to accompany the ordinances of the day. And so kneeling down to prayer, he will retire to rest.

On the Sabbath morning he will rise, not two or three hours after his usual time, with a countenance as if he were already tired of the day, but early, that he may call upon the Lord, and in the spirit of the

Psalmist, "This is the day which the Lord hath made ; we will rejoice and be glad in it." On this morning he will mention before the Lord more fully in private and family prayer the whole church, and pray in particular for his own Minister, and the congregation with which he assembles, that the one may bring forth wholesome, searching, and edifying truth, and that all may profit thereby ; as regards the day generally he spends it to the Lord. He does not consider it, as too many do, a day of idleness, or a day to be passed in visiting his earthly friends, but a day to expect and entertain that heavenly Friend whose visits he esteems above all precious.

From the very nature of his avocations the Christian Householder is sometimes called to attend to necessary things on the Sabbath. He must loose his ox and his ass to water ; he must set provender before the various animals which he has under his care, &c. But he will keep a watchful eye not to do more than real necessity requires ; he will remember that mere busy catching times are not an excuse, for instance, to disobey the command, "in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest ;" and he will so manage that necessary things may not interfere with the times of public worship.

With regard to the public services, he will make arrangements that all his family shall have the opportunity of attending once a day, and as many of them as possible twice ; and he will have them all attend the same place, or, at least, form of worship ; for he utterly deprecates that system which scatters the family half a dozen different ways on the Sabbath day, as he knows it must be subversive of all order, respect, and

good government, which as an Householder he is called on to exercise ; for while he is kind to all the branches of his family, he reads that he must, as one fearing God, rule well his own house, and he feels that due subjection and respect cannot be kept up, unless all are of one mind. Besides that, he considers the sin of schism to be very great in the sight of God.

The Christian Householder goes to the place of worship with becoming reverence and decorum, taking pains that the rest of his family shall do likewise ; and with a holy expectation of peculiar blessing, for he cannot away with that notion which some seem to entertain, that all days, and all places of meeting are alike, but humbly believes that while God hearkens to his people at all times, and every where, he reserves the richest manifestations of his grace and love for those times and those places which He hath peculiarly set apart for this purpose.

At public worship the Christian Householder is an example of reverent and holy attention, not merely to his own children and servants, but to the whole congregation. At Church he minglest in the service with a devout tone himself, and encourages his family to do so likewise, endeavouring if possible, that they shall have prayer-books, and be able to read in them. From worship he takes care to return seriously and soberly, and avoids every thing which may tend to wipe away the impression made, watching against that great enemy who taketh the seed out of the *way side* hearer ; and during the day he keeps up a serious, though cheerful demeanour, setting apart some times for private meditation and prayer over what he has heard.

In the evening more particularly, if there be no

service, he gathers his family around him, at which time he puts some serious and edifying questions to them, calls for an account of what they may have heard at sermon, or the children at school, and makes himself any remarks on parts of the sermon which struck him, or may appear to convey suitable warning, reproof, or encouragement to any present, always seeking at the hearing of God's word to carry away some wholesome truth, some clearer or more comforting notion of Jesus Christ, which he may feed on himself, and make the subject of practical observation, as occasion may offer.

And so with prayer and reading a few verses he retires, that he may rise with God's blessing, and a Christian frame, to the duties of the week. C. S.

THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL.

(Continued from page 66.)

BUT though the vision of the Church triumphant was eclipsed for a time, it again burst forth with renewed brightness and vigour in the 15th century. The Milanese territory in Italy,* and the vallies of Piedmont, were the cradle of the Reformation. In due time Wickliffe and Luther appeared, the first in Eng-

* The spiritual supremacy of Rome, and almost in the moment of its birth, has been disowned even in Italy. The arch-diocese of the Milan, consisting of seven provinces, had long pursued their own ritual, and established the Ambrosian Liturgy. But their first open separation from Rome was in the year 553. It became more distinct in 590, when nine of the Bishops rejected the communion of the Pope as a heretic, and refused obedience to the command of the Emperor Mauritius to be present at a council at Rome, denying that they could communicate with Gregory the 1st.—See Allix's *Churches of Piedmont*, Page 35.

land, the latter in Germany, and both the heralds of that Almighty power which was again to be seen exerting itself on behalf of the oppressed church. The Conqueror had indeed retired from the field for a while, but now his followers beheld him, visibly, as it were, riding forth to their rescue: to pursue again his career of triumph, with the crown sparkling bright upon his head, and the same awful bow in his hand. Then also the wrath of the Beast and his followers was aroused, and fearful was the havoc which they made of the saints. The blood of the martyrs of Jesus flowed even with a more copious stream than in the first ages of the Church. Spain, Italy, France, Holland, and England lent each its army of noble victims, to resist even unto death the tyranny of anti-christian Rome. In vain the inquisition exhausted its store of hellish cruelties to shake their courage and to subdue their faith. To no purpose did it assume ‘the form of a fiend enveloped and enthroned in the circle of agony and flame.’ The vital principle of Protestantism was not to be extinguished by torture, or terrified into submission. Its forces still manfully maintained their ground; for they saw that the Conqueror was near them, and with them, and that they *must* finally prevail. Nor was it long, indeed, before they beheld the might of his arm exerted in their own cause. The beast was struck with that deadly shaft with which he is still writhing. In many of the provinces of Europe, as well as in our own land, Protestantism achieved a conquest over Popery decisive, powerful, and wonderful. The Churches were cleansed of their idols. The Bible was restored to its rightful authority, and the people were permitted to hear and read in their own

native tongues the wonderful works of God. Bigotry and superstition were driven forth from their strong holds, like another Cain with a brand of a withering curse stamped upon them. A pure and apostolic liturgy was allowed to lift up its voice, where for so long a time it had been stifled with the corrupt and carnal ceremonies of the Mass and the Missal. Lazy Monks and ignorant Priests were stripped of their ill-gotten wealth, and pernicious influence ; and their place supplied by active, learned, and holy men, who will be the lights and ornaments of every generation. Thus was it made manifest who was on the side of Protestantism, till at length, in the person of Queen Elizabeth, the crown which the popish Princes of England had so long insecurely and ignobly worn, was firmly settled on the head of a Protestant defender of the faith.

Since that never to be forgotten æra, the Conqueror has not left the field of battle. The progress of "the Warrior on the White Horse" has been marked by deeds of unexampled glory. He has rode forth every where crowned, and armed,—“conquering and to conquer.” Throughout the world the banners of Jesus have been uplifted by the soldiers of the Cross. Missionaries, bearing “the sword of the Spirit” in their hands, have been pre-eminently successful in the work of conversion, amidst all that prodigious extent of territory which forms the circle of the British dominions. The vast empire of Hindoostan, from one end of it to the other, acknowledges the sceptre of a Christian Prince. From the Himalayan mountains * in the

* ‘It is a remarkable fact,’ says Bishop Heber, ‘that one of the earliest, the largest, and handsomest Churches of India should be found in so remote a situation as in sight of the Himalayan Mountains.’—*Journey through the Upper Provinces of India.*

North, to Cape Comorin in the South, the veneration paid for thousands of years to Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva is fast declining. The ears of Juggernaut already moulder in their temples ; and the Moloch of India is no more permitted to behold his altars saturated with the blood of self-immolated widows. Christian principles have spread their mighty influence even to the remotest islands of the Pacific Ocean, and in many instances, as at Owhyhee, and Otaheite, the idols have been committed to the flames. In short the Gospel has already run through the whole circumference of the globe, and mighty empires are now springing up in Australia and America, which bid fair to make the blessings of Christianity coextensive with civilization. Even where neither Missionaries, nor Christian settlers have yet been able to penetrate, the Bible, already translated into 150 languages, finds its way and serves the purpose of the pioneer, to clear, and prepare the road for the march of its living advocates.

Every circumstance in the present history of man points to the future triumphs of the Christian faith, and seems to promise that they shall surpass in extent and grandeur any which it has yet obtained. The worldly position of all Pagan, and Mahomedan kingdoms is feeble, and tottering at the present time, and places them in strange contrast with the high and commanding aspect which the Christian, and antipapal powers of Europe assume. Paganism already anticipates the fall of its temples ; Mahomedanism sees its proud cresent waning to a thread ; and Antichrist, "the man of sin," though still sitting in the temple of God, feels his strength palsied, in the prospect of a day when "the Lord shall consume him with the Spirit of his mouth and with the brightness of his

coming. Nevertheless, the present shaking among the nations, and all the signs of the times, conspire to shew that the contest of the Church with its enemies is not yet at an end. Infidelity, Popery, and Paganism, are evidently leagued together for a further and more tremendous struggle. But the day cannot be very distant, when the triumph of the Cross shall be universal, and when the souls of the Martyrs shall be avenged (Rev. vi. 10.) Ere long we believe the sixth seal of the Apocalypse shall be opened, the seventh trumpet shall sound, and the seventh vial shall be poured out in the air. (compare Rev. vi. 12, 17, with xi. 15, 19. and xvi. 17, 21.) Then, indeed, shall the magnificent vision of the Church's final triumph described by St. John, (Rev. xix. 12—21,) be fully realized. The armies of heaven shall go forth under their victorious leader to make a complete, and terrible overthrow of all the enemies of God; and that anthem shall be sung by all the hosts of the redeemed which St. John heard—"loud as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

In the prospect therefore of a period so overwhelmingly glorious, and awful; a period which will usher in the Millennium, or reign of Christ and his saints, how deeply does it become us to reflect what part we take in that holy warfare which the Conqueror is now carrying on, and which is only preparatory to that still more tremendous warfare which he will wage with his enemies hereafter! Are we now of the Church militant upon earth, or do we fight under the standard of sin, and Satan? Are we serving God, or Mammon—Christ, or Belial? Are we deeply anxious, and ever

ready, to do all we can for the circulation of the scriptures—that mightiest instrument in the hand of God for pulling down the strong holds of the enemy; and do we stimulate, and urge on by our prayers and pecuniary aid those Missionary Warriors who go forth with their lives in their hands to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God? Surely these are the all-important questions, which not to have answered shall strike terror into the soul of every speechless traitor to the cause of God, and in the great and terrible day, when he shall behold the “Prince of the kings of the earth” crowned, and equipped for the final victory over all his foes; hurling his fiery darts of vengeance on every side, and trampling into the dust of eternal death all those who have dared to swell the ranks, and to uphold the banners of the Prince of Darkness.

GREAT-HART.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 61.)

(7) Let the *falls of others* that seem stronger than you make you more thankful, and more compassionate. If they make you more thankful, they will make you more compassionate. Though you may be engraven with more lively characters of God's image, and in an higher manner like to God, yet grace is to be acknowledged that kept temptations from overcoming you. Let not your pride, but your praise take encouragement from thence. Think not yourselves better, because you are victorious while others are defeated, but God more gracious to you.

The continuance of his assisting grace was the cause of your success; as the withdrawing of it was the cause of the other's defeat. If this too much natural corruption be indulged, it is a ground to fear we may shortly be his successors in the like fault, or a worse.

Be more compassionate to others ; " If a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. vii. 1.) Let the faults of others teach us to exercise the grace of humility in our hearts, and carriage towards them. Make not the breach wider by our censures, which is too wide already by Satan's power. Restore with meekness, not proud censoriousness ; by a dove-like meekness like that of our Saviour ; the case may shortly be our own, and we may stand in need of his assistance for our restoration. To pity or help a gracious man in such a case, is to assist Christ in his charge, and will be kindly accepted by him. God commanded in the law to help a beast, if they saw it in a ditch. It is unnatural to let an infant lie on the ground, and not lend a hand to lift it up ; much more to let an infant grace, the birth of God and charge of Christ, lie grovelling in the earth by the power of sin.

(*To be continued.*)

THE VERSE SYSTEM.

1st. Week, v. 19 to 28 ; Gospel preached in Ephesus, Phenice, and Antioch ; Church formed at the latter city. Barnabas visits it, and goes from thence to seek Saul, with whom he labours there a year. Agabus prophesies of the dearth.

Verse 19. We return now to the history of the progress of the Gospel mentioned in ch. viii. 1, 4, and we find that, during the time in which the interesting events respecting Philip, Saul, and Cornelius had been taking place, these disciples had been actively employed, still confining their ministry to the Jews.

Verse 20. Cyrene was a city in Africa; Cyprus an island in the Mediterranean sea, most infamous for the grossest abominations of heathen idolatry; Antioch the chief city of Syria, and "the Grecians" to whom these converted foreigners preached, doubtless Gentiles.

Verse 21. "Believed and turned to the Lord;" Simon believed and was baptized, Chap. viii. 13; it is that believing only which produces a turning to the Lord, which is effectual to the saving of the soul. **Heb. x. 29.** 1 Thess. i. 9.

Verse 25. The conduct of Barnabas in first introducing Saul as a disciple to the apostles when they were afraid of him (ch. ix. 27,) and his now going to fetch him to be a fellow-labourer with himself, and a fellow reaper with him of the promising harvest of the church at Antioch, seems to shew forth much of the love, largeness of mind, and superiority to any feeling of jealousy on account of the superior gifts and abilities of Saul, which mark him out as "a good man." v. 24.

Verse 26. Antioch was the first place where there was a church composed of Jews and Gentiles. The name Christians, (though probably at first a term of reproach given them by their enemies) now suited both. When shall the time be when we shall need no other to point out the different branches of the Church of Christ?

2nd Week, v. 29, to ch. xii. v. 5. The disciples at Antioch send relief to those in Judea. Herod kills James, and imprisons Peter. The Church prays for him.

Verse 29. This “labour of love” comes in as a blessed proof that they were not called Christians without good reason. Judea was now, from many reasons, become a poor country; the disciples would be amongst the poorest of all, (for the rich disciples had already parted with their goods Acts ii. 45. and iv. 34—37.) this therefore would be a most reasonable relief.

Verse 2. This was that James who was one of the three witnesses of Christ’s transfiguration, and agony in the garden, one of the sons of Zebedee of whom Christ declared that they should indeed drink of his cup, &c. (Matt. xx. 20—23.) He was called now to experience the bitterness of that draught, and the truth of those words; but it was in order to his sitting at Christ’s right hand, which however ignorant a request it was in his mother’s mouth at that time, he was thus to see truly fulfilled.

Verse 3. Herod inheriting the cruelty of his grandfather who slew the children of Bethlehem, as well as of his uncle who beheaded John the Baptist, feels no scruple, if it will please the people, to dip his hands in Peter’s blood.

Verse 4, 5. What the strength of four quaternions of soldiers* is when opposed to the united and unceasing prayers of the church we shall see.

3rd Week, v. 6 to v. 12; An Angel delivers Peter from prison, he goes to the house of John Mark.

Verse 6. “Bound with two chains;” the prisoner (according to the Roman custom) was chained to the soldiers between whom he slept; his right hand chained to the left hand of one soldier, and his left to the right of the other, so that there was no possibility of his

* That is sixteen in all, four to watch over him at a time; one set for each of the four watches into which the night was divided.

moving without disturbing them, should they chance to fall asleep. This, with the keepers before the door, was indeed keeping Peter as sure as the arm of man could.

Verse 10. A miracle was needed to take Peter from the midst of his guards, and to carry him safe through the remaining guards and gates of his prison. When he was landed safe in the street he is left—we are not to expect God's *special* interference in behalf of his people further than it is absolutely needful.

Verse 11. By this we see that this was not a vision such as Peter had seen before, but a real miraculous deliverance.

Verse 12: Doubtless a well-known assembling place for the persecuted church. This was indeed to pray and faint not, when they kept it up all night; but they had cause, they had lost Stephen and James, and could ill afford to lose Peter too.

4th Week, v. 13—19. Received with astonishment at the house. Herod puts the keepers to death.

Verse 14. That the unexpected sound of Peter's voice, well known to her in the various notes of preaching, prayer, and praise, should have so overcome her that she left him standing at the door while she carried the news, is very natural. This proof of affection would abundantly repay Peter for being kept longer continuing knocking in the cold.

Verse 15, 16. Little did they expect such an answer to prayer; they had not faith to see that with God all things are possible; and therefore would rather suppose the messenger mad, or take up the idea that his spirit had been suffered to appear, than that he himself had been granted to them in answer to their prayers.

Verse 17. This James was James the son of Alpheus, the author of the Epistle that goes by his name.



ISAIAH. XXXV.

As Sharon's rose shall bloom the wild,
The desert, of its gloom beguil'd,
Shall richest blossoms fling ;
Bright Lebanon rejoicing high
And Carmel mounting to the sky,
The Lord of Glory sing.

Strong in His strength ye fearful be,
In faith confirm the feeble knee,
On high your God behold ;
With everlasting mercy bright
He comes His saints with boundless might
To gather to his fold.

The blind shall see the Gospel ray,
The lame shall leap the shining way,
That leads to heaven's mount ;
The deaf shall hear, the dumb shall sing,
Streams in the wilderness shall spring
From life's eternal fount.

Thus the Redeemed safely led
The way of holiness shall tread
To Zion's endless day :
There where the Lord his glory spreads,
Joy everlasting on their heads,
Sorrow shall flee away.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

OR,

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THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

No. VIII.

SPRING.

"Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land!" So sung Solomon, in the lovely land of Judea, a thousand years before the Christian æra. But Spring has been a season delightful in all ages and climates ; though in none perhaps more so than in the British islands. Willingly therefore may the Church listen to the royal Poet, as if Christ himself were addressing her in the gospel language of pure affection, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." To this call the Christian Naturalist would

readily respond, and go forth amidst those scenes which now bear the loveliest impress of the Redeemer's hand. He would enter upon the first of May with something of that ardour of spirit which led our rural ancestors to welcome it with a variety of festive ceremonies; not indeed that he approves of all these, and in particular that of dancing round a maypole he regards as a pagan ceremony which has little meaning in itself, and has oftentimes been attended with much of folly if not of sin. Still, however, he would esteem it a delightful and profitable employment to go forth and gather flowers on the first May morning; to greet the beams of the rising Luminary while the heavy dews are yet glistening in countless drops upon the rising herbage. What can be more interesting than thus to hail the arrival of a season which is full of pleasing ideas, and which is so anxiously looked forward to amidst the gloomy and stormy months of winter? Doubtless there is much in Spring to awaken the attention of every inquiring mind, and to call forth a tribute of gratitude to the Creator from every thankful heart. Who can listen to the thrush warbling amidst the groves, or behold the lark mounting upwards towards the gates of heaven, without wishing to join in the melodious concert of praise which is now poured forth by these and innumerable feathered songsters of the earth and air? Who can survey the fields clothed with verdure, the trees expanding into full leaf, and the flowers putting on their gayest and freshest dress, without feeling as it were a new emotion, a sensation peculiar to the season of Spring? Fragrance is in the air, beauty in the earth, and brilliancy in the sky. Under the influence of a reviving temperature, fresh

vitality seems infused into all the springs of nature. It wears the aspect of youth, and its blushes and smiles are those of virgin innocence and loveliness. We look and we look again at the picture, and it seems to carry back the thoughts to that period when man came fresh and uncorrupted from his Maker's hand ; "when the morning stars first sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy ;" when the earth blossomed forth into unnumbered beauties beneath its Creator's first blessing ; when sin had not yet cursed the ground for man's sake, and man himself, the lord of this lower world, walked forth amidst the charms of Eden, to make his first delicious banquet upon the tree of life.

But if our thoughts are thus carried backward by the season to that time when man had not yet fallen, they may also be carried forward to a period and a place of still greater importance ; to that world where there is fulness of joy ; an eternal spring of all conceivable blessedness in the heavenly Paradise. Poetry may help to express this idea, and has well embodied the sentiment in a few lines addressed to the Creator,—

' Oh Thou our good beyond compare,
If thus thy meaner works are fair ;
If thus thy bounties gild the span
Of ruin'd earth, and sinful man,
How glorious must that mansion be
Where thy redeem'd shall live with thee !'

It has pleased our God in infinite mercy, notwithstanding the fall, to leave us a taste of those pleasures which we might altogether have been deprived of upon earth, in order that we may better know how to prize, and earnestly seek after those joys which are at his right hand for evermore. Surely this is the right improvement we ought to make of Spring. We shall have

lived to little purpose, and have looked upon the beauties of opening nature in vain, if these things do not carry our thoughts upwards, and quicken our steps towards that heavenly Eden where pleasures, such as the season now presents us with, shall not be transient and uncertain as they are here, but lasting and never fading as their great Author. The world we live in is still for the most part a goodly world. It is still sumptuously stocked and adorned, and was evidently intended for a better guest than man. But the heavenly Paradise, though infinitely more beautiful, will find all its inhabitants worthy of it. Its glory will be as much, nay far more enhanced by the presence of these, than the earthly Paradise was by the presence of Adam. Here indeed there is too often a strange incongruity. Human fiends pollute the scenes which might almost seem fit for the residence of angels. Hence, although lovely in themselves, they lose much of their charms; and we are filled with shame and sorrow at beholding what seems almost a confirmation of the infidel sentiment with regard to some beautiful countries,—

‘Where all save the spirit of man is divine.’

But in the Paradise above, nothing of this seeming opposition shall exist. Heaven, with its angelic bands, and its glorious company of the just who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, shall present no unharmonious feature. It shall receive within it nothing that defileth. The element and the scene shall not be more pure than the blessed inhabitants that breathe its air and behold its beauty. The beams of an eternal spring shall only serve to burst the buds, and to unfold the blossoms of eternal righteousness. In the contemplation of such a season, it cannot but inspire a feeling of melancholy that man

should think so little about this high and immortal destiny which awaits the righteous hereafter. In the same book of nature which now displays the resurrection of a vegetable world from the deathlike sleep of winter, he may behold a striking emblem, and a strong proof, drawn from analogy, of the wonderful power by which God will finally raise the bodies of all the seed of Adam that shall sleep in the dust when the Archangel's trump shall summon them to judgment. It is the Gospel volume only, however, which reveals the secret of man's indifference to that great event, and proclaims him to be already "dead in trespasses and sins." It is here also we discover the necessity of recovering that image which was lost in Paradise; and which must be again regained by a new creation of the heart; a moral spring of the human character; under the quickening influence of Christ as the Sun of Righteousness. He who has experienced this renewing of his mind, has already passed from spiritual death to spiritual life. And it is his privilege while he views "all nature quick and bursting into birth" at this season, to behold this but as a type of that still more glorious period when there shall be "new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness."

But what solace can the unconverted sinner derive from such reflections, or indeed from any thing in the present season. Nature only rises up to condemn him. It proclaims that the wintry curtain of spiritual death and sleep still hangs over his soul. The leaves and flowers, the birds and breezes, and the balmy skies around him can yield him no pleasure as long as he reflects that he must at length awake from his dream of folly, but only to learn the dreadful truth that for him Eternity has no second Spring.

E. B.

THE CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLDER IN THE WEEK.

In a former paper I endeavoured to describe the Religious Householder's observance of the Sabbath, perhaps as a sequel it may be well also to draw up a short transcript of his conduct through the rest of the week.

As the Sabbath well observed is the right introduction to a godly life during the week, so your correspondent in the February No. aptly terms the morning 'the sabbath of the day,' which, well laid out, will conduce much to good living through the rest of it. To be begun as it ought, the morning must be begun with God; for the Christian Householder is assured that humble and dependant communion with God through Christ will alone enable him to act well, and that prayer is the appointed means of maintaining that communion. In order to this he strives to take time by the forelock. Early risers are generally prosperous in temporal things, and, when they are under the influence of grace, in spiritual things; and he finds that most of the eminent saints, as far as any account is given of them, rose betimes.

Nor is he exact only in his private devotions; he takes care that his family shall meet also for social prayer. His avocations may prevent him from devoting much time in the morning to this duty, but breakfast must be had, and spiritual food is no less necessary than bodily. He will introduce at social prayer some portion of the Scriptures, taking care that *what is done he done not in a hurried and slovenly

* When time is very limited it might be well for each member of the family to repeat the verse for the day, according to the plan suggested in some former numbers of this publication.

manner, but with reverence and devotion, without which he cannot expect a blessing.

—Into the duties of his calling the Christian Householder enters with alacrity and cheerfulness, believing that he serves God as acceptably in the common occupations of life in their due season, as even in religious duties, (provided the one are not followed to the exclusion of the other.) He is indeed watchful over himself; lest while he is not slothful in business, his heart should become too deeply engrossed in worldly things. But while he keeps up a prayerful dependance on God, and an eye in every thing to His glory, the same principle which makes him soar above this earth for his ends of action, causes him, whatsoever he doeth, to do it heartily as unto the Lord and not to men.

Thus far in regard to his general attention to his avocations. But in order to see the character of the Christian Householder, we must view it in several relations which require particular mention.

As a dealer, he desires to act fairly and honourably by all; not to conceal the faults and blemishes of any thing he has on sale, as he would not so be done by; nor indeed to go beyond or defraud his brother, in any matter.

As respects his accounts, he endeavours to keep them in due order, both to prevent and correct mistakes, as well as that he may at all times be able to see how his money, a talent entrusted him by God, is expended. Farther, he keeps in mind the good old adage, ‘Short accounts make long friends;’ and the still higher maxim of Scripture, “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.” *

* It is astonishing with this Scripture before them how little men think of dying in debt.

In attending public places where business necessarily calls him, he is cautious just to transact his concerns and no more. Above all he is wary of sitting down with careless worldly acquaintances after business is over, ostensibly to take a pint of ale, or a glass of grog. This he fears to do, lest he should subject himself to hear the name of the Lord taken in vain, to lose his time in idle, unprofitable conversation, or what is worse, and perhaps to be drawn into the awful sin of drunkenness. Markets, court days, &c. if his calling necessitates his attendance on them, should redouble the Christian Householder's watchfulness and prayer lest he should fall into sin.

In his family, and in the several relations of Husband, Father, Master,* the Christian Householder endeavours to conform himself to the precepts of the Bible, which he often studies with prayer; and in general while he keeps up the dignity and authority with which as an Householder he is by God invested, he is kind, affectionate, and courteous to every member of his household, showing a good example himself, and carefully repressing what may be unchristian in the manner, language, and behaviour of others.

As a subject, the Christian Householder neither indulges himself in any violent or disrespectful language against the King, his ministers, &c., nor does he pass it in others without reproof, remembering the words of St. Peter, "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are

* It would be well if those who have entered on such relations set apart a monthly season for solemn self-examination as to the manner in which they have fulfilled them.

sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

As holding any civil office of public trust, he considers he has important duties to fulfil, on the proper administration of which much of his country's peace, quiet, and welfare depend. He desires then to set an example of justice, moderation, and diligence in whatever he is called on to fill, whether Overseer, Churchwarden, or any higher and more responsible station.

As a member of society, he comes forward on all just and proper occasions both with person and purse; not skulking behind a feeble timidity when his voice or his arm are required in defence of right principle or the correction of what is evil, and ready as far as his means will allow to contribute to the temporal and spiritual wants of his fellow-creatures.

As an instructor, besides reading the Bible at evening family-prayer, (which he will observe with solemnity, and the more so should his time be limited in the morning,) he will perhaps teach or cause to be taught, as occasion may require, any domestics or apprentices belonging to him such things as may be useful to their station, keeping in mind, however, that all knowledge is rather a curse than a blessing, if not blended with, and sanctified by religious knowledge.

This Mr. Editor, is I think something the manner in which an enlightened Christian Householder will regulate himself; in which I have noted down what has occurred to me at the moment. Other traits in his character might be suggested, and perhaps important ones, which some of your correspondents may think it well to notice. These such as they are, I commit to

God's blessing, hoping they may prove useful. In connection with the subject of good works I would subjoin the following beautiful extract from an eminent writer:—

'As robes and a coronet do not constitute a peer, but are ensigns and appendages of his peerage, for the will of the Sovereign is the grand efficient cause which elevates a commoner to noble rank; and as the very patent of creation is only an authentic manifesto, not casual, but declarative, of the king's pleasure to make his subject a nobleman: just so, good works do not make us alive to God; nor justify us before him; nor exalt us to the dignity and felicity of peerage: they are but the robes, the coronet, and the manifesto, shining in our lives and conversations; and making evident to all around us that we are, indeed, and in truth, chosen to salvation, justified through Christ, and renewed by the Holy Ghost.'

C. S.

THE VIOLETS.

For we are unto God a sweet savour in Christ.

I WAS taking a walk on a fine bright morning in March, towards the village of C. My way lay through a lovely glen, of which it has been said that 'it would suit the muse of Cowper, and prompt one who felt with him to say with holy rapture,

'The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree;
And seem by thy sweet bounty made,
For those who follow thee.'

Oh! would that I had realized this use of that lovely spot—that prayer and praise had always occupied my

heart as I passed along it! I had a sweet lesson on the occasion I speak of, taught me by some of the beauties I was admiring. I was attracted by the sight of a bank covered with violets. The sun was shining full upon it, and its genial warmth had opened the flowers, and caused them to exhibit the most beautiful colours. But when I began to gather them, I found with the exception of very few, that their colour was all they had to recommend them; they were not the sort of violets which afford the sweet fragrance we expect to find in that flower. It struck me forcibly, that this was an emblem of the Church, the professing Church of Christ. How many are there of fair and promising appearance, professing and seeming to be of the truth, who yet fail to send up a "sweet smelling savour to God"—who are wanting in those holy and devout and grateful dispositions and affections, which their profession indicates. I bid my heart take the lesson home. What fragrance have I diffused around? What incense have I sent upwards? While thinking and talking of the beauty of the works of God, where is my praise for that beauty, where is my adoration of the power that produced it? Are not my words and thoughts, is not my whole profession and character like those scentless violets? There is beauty even in the outward profession of religion and holiness; but if the inward principle be wanting or deficient, there will be no fragrance shed around, no incense wafted upwards. And yet I have been situated as it were on a green sunny bank; my opportunities and means of grace have been many.

In pursuing my walk, I passed out of the glen into a lane; on one side of which was a wall which had no

bank or foliage near it, but growing out of that wall I found a solitary violet root, and gathered from it one flower so sweet that I was induced to throw away all the rest I had before, though the colour was not perhaps so bright as theirs. Here, I thought, is another emblem, another lesson. That flower was growing on the rock ; it had no obvious means of nourishment for its root ; there was no earth visible ; it seemed clinging on the wall ; yet all the flowers on the green bank failed to afford fragrance like that which it exhaled. How often does the humble, retired, and perhaps solitary Christian, far from outward privileges and advantages, yet clinging to and rooted on the Rock of Salvation, and imbibing the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, grow up and flourish and yield the fragrance as well as the beauty of holiness, unperceived or little noticed except by the eye of the cultivator.

Oh ! sweet and privileged flower, what an envied lot is thine ! "Thine odour is well pleasing unto the Lord !" It is derived from him, it returns to him again. "He smells a sweet savour." Thy praise and thy devotion, and thy holy life, is a perpetual incense, acceptable to him, and refreshing to those of his people who are permitted to inhale its fragrance as they come near thee in their pilgrimage !

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 98.)

(8.) *Despise not therefore small grace in any. Is Christ to have a special regard to smoking flax and bruised reeds ? Is it fit we should be of a temper contrary to our Saviour, in despising that which God*

hath ordered him to regard ? Must that be the object of our laughter, which is the object of Christ's tenderest care ? Is that to be the subject of our scorn, which is one of the chief parts of his commission to take care of ? Can he be thought to be regenerate, who is of a disposition so contrary to him who ought to be his pattern ? If God's soul be well-pleased with Christ's care of small grace, he must abominate any temper so opposite to his own, and that of his Son. It is a pride and a scorn like to that of devils, not a spirit like that of God. As the least sin in others must not draw our affection, so the weakest grace in others must not lie under our contempt. Would you tread upon a diamond because it is little, or slight a star bigger than the whole earth, because it seems a little twinkling spark in your eye ? Let us look to it then, that we disesteem not that in another, which is of more worth than the whole mass of the ungracious world. It is a gallant disposition not to be offended with that smoke, which doth not offend the Redeemer's eye.

(9.) Stand fast. Leave not off till you gain a full victory ; till judgment be brought forth to victory. It is necessary. He that is not at last victorious, was never any soldier under Christ's pay, or inspired with Christ's Spirit. Men may think they stand fast, and are in a prosperous way to victory, when they are not ; "Wherefore let him that thinks he stands fast, take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. x. 12.) There must therefore be much watchfulness and wariness used. Though this doctrine stands firm, yet such exhortations must be used. The word of Christ to Peter, *that his faith should not fail*, was as firm as a rock,

yet "he saith unto Peter, watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation." (Mat. xxvi. 40, 41;) he stirs him particularly to his watchful guard, though there were two others besides, that had not that assurance from his mouth, that their faith should not fail, as Peter had.

Paul promises the Corinthians that "God would not suffer them to be tempted above measure," (1 Cor. x. 13, 14,) must they therefore stand idle, and suffer themselves to be carried down the stream of a temptation, and leave God wholly to do his work? No, ver. 14, he draws an argument from this promise to exhort them to their duty, "wherefore my beloved, flee from idolatry;" fly, not creep, not go, not walk. Promises are not to encourage our laziness, but quicken our industry. Let not the charge then brought against Ephraim fall upon us, that "our goodness is like a morning dew." (Hos. vi. 4.) When men begin in the spirit and end in the flesh, the end will be both dreadful and shameful.

An eternal crown is entailed upon a constant faithfulness. Our running in a race near to the end will be insignificant, if then our antagonist get the start of us. It is by this constancy we come nearest the name of God, which is, "I am that I am," unchangeable in perfections, and immutable in goodness. Our actions should be suitable to the reward promised, which is not for a day or two, but for eternity. We must hold on and wrestle, till we get the blessing. Without continuance we lose our pains, and the fruit of them, our crown. Run, not slowly, but that you may obtain, let your eye be upon the crown, you will never else run swiftly, because not cheerfully.

But withal, *means* must be used, to stand fast in grace, and gain a victory. God does not preserve a Christian by force, or compel him to keep his standing, as he establishes the earth, or the heavens, but by rational means, by promises and precepts suitable to the condition of a rational and voluntary agent, and proposing effective and alluring arguments to encourage him in his course; yet he leaves not the success barely to this, and the operation of our own wills, but attends it with the supernatural power of his Spirit, suitable to the manner of our first conversion, which was not by violence, but by the proposals of the Gospel, and the salvation promised in it; wherein a secret power of the Spirit was exerted upon the heart, enlightening the mind, and inclining the will, and drawing it with the cords of a man in a way of love, to a compliance with the gospel promise.

So likewise in the preservation and progress of grace, there is still a secret working of the Spirit of God with outward exhortations and admonitions to perseverance; thereby keeping up the new habit and new heart in us, quickening it by outward means and rational ways, suited to the judgment and reason of the new creature; and thus keeping his hand upon the will, he moves it to such ends, for which he first touched it, and draws it on from one degree to another, till it comes to perfection.

Therefore we must not make use of this doctrine to neglect the means God hath appointed for the establishing and completing of grace; since God acts with us as rational creatures, we are not only passive but active subjects in this work. John assures the believers, that the unction in them should preserve them

from soul-destroying errors. There is this passive perseverance ; " As it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (1 John ii. 27.) Must they therefore be careless ? No, ver. 28, he backs it with duty on their parts. " Wherefore, my little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence ;" abide in him that certainly abides in you. There is scarce a promise in the whole book of God to encourage us, but is somewhere or other attended with a precept to quicken us.

(*To be Continued.*)

THE SHIPWRECKED BIBLE.

In this county of Cornwall, surrounded as it is on three sides by the sea, on the waters and along the shores of which so many of its inhabitants get their livelihood, perhaps the following plain account of the loss of a little trading vessel on the northern coast, may not be without its interest : and, it may be, by God's blessing, its use also, to some of the readers of the 'Light from the West.'

Every one living near the sea, cannot but remember the severe gale from the north-west, which blew on the 19th and 20th of last month. On the morning of the last named day, word was brought to a gentleman who lived near, that a Sloop was seen in great distress just off the small bay of Trevarion, and he hastened with some friends immediately to the spot. How can I hope to picture the scene ? The oldest and hardiest say they never saw a heavier swell, or felt a keener blast. It seemed as if every breaker, as it came in with the force of a coming tide, before the wind rose to the

height of the tall cliffs whose sides it climbed, and the surf was to be met for more than a mile inland, blown about like feathers in all directions. No one could approach the edge of the cliffs unless secured by ropes, and it was dangerous even to lie flat on its surface. Who, then, could look without anxious foreboding on the little bark tossed about on the outside of the bay? I believe there was no heart that did not beat for her safety. And whatever may have been said (and I fear too justly) formerly of the cruelty and avarice of Cornish wreckers, let me do the Mawgan men the justice to say, that on this occasion they cheerfully obeyed the direction of the gentlemen present, in procuring ropes, &c., to assist in saving the lives of those whom they expected would be thrown on the shore: and many I doubt not, had they been put to the trial, would have risked their own in endeavouring to do so. It soon appeared to those on shore, that the only chance of saving the crew would be to run the vessel immediately into the bay; for though she would certainly be dashed in pieces by the breakers, the lives of those on board might be saved. No doubt they thought the same, for the little vessel was now plainly discerned making gallantly for the shore. They saw perhaps the friendly help awaiting them, or they were supported by superior aid, for it was plain there was no want of skill or fortitude in her crew. The little bark was steered steadily forward, and some will even say they saw the Pilot at the helm. This I doubt, for the haze occasioned by the storm was too heavy; however, be this as it may, all looked with expectation and hope to the coming in of the sloop, which seemed almost a thing of life and thought, so steadily did she move forward, and so

nobly did she breast the waves. But he who rules them had decreed otherwise. An enormous breaker was seen in the distance, rising like a sea monster above its fellows. It was, as one of the Preventive men will call it, ‘a cruel wave ;’ it followed the little vessel, and clashing against her stern, swept entirely over her deck. She trembled, reeled, and had nearly righted, when a second breaker followed and completed the work of destruction by tumbling her entirely over and sinking her beneath the waters. She arose only a mastless hull, which driven by wind and tide up the beach, was dashed in pieces by three successive waves. And what became of the immortal beings who had so lately directed her movements ? All had sunk. Human aid was vain ; it would have been madness to attempt rendering any amid waves and winds which seemed to bid defiance to the weak efforts of man. The spectators therefore of the melancholy scene remained on the beach in the expectation that each wave might wash in the body of one of the sufferers. Shortly, something was perceived, and finally secured unharmed from the water.

And now, my dear readers, let me ask you, had your dearest friend, your father, your husband, or brother been in that vessel, what it would have given you most consolation to have seen arrive ? Gold, jewels ? No ; in that first hour of sorrow, you would have felt them as valueless to you as they were to your lost friend : and, moreover, you would have thought on the pang it might have cost him to part from them. It would probably have given you more satisfaction to have seen some remembrance of your affection, some parting gift. But even here a doubt might have arisen, a fear lest

any human love might have come between him and his Saviour in the hour of need. Oh ! it was something beyond all price ; something he could not love too much ! *It was a Bible !* And on its first leaf was written the name of the owner, and that of the kind friend who had given it to him. I believe there was no one present but felt a satisfaction at seeing the hallowed book ; and it was well remarked by a poor woman that from its coming to shore so soon, it was doubtless in constant use, and not locked up in a box, but probably, even at the moment of the ship's going down, it was in the hand of one on its deck. It was natural to expect that this little vessel had some one on board who feared God. And we afterwards learnt, her captain was a truly pious character, and when, ten days after, some friends came to claim a body of a sailor which was washed on shore, they confirmed the pleasing account, and added the following of this seaman also :—Instead of spending his last hour before sailing in taking a parting glass, as is the custom of too many, he assembled his family and friends for the purpose of prayer ; and when his wife entreated him to remain at home from this voyage, he gently reproved her want of faith, saying, ‘Even should our vessel perish, sudden death, I humbly trust, will be to me sudden mercy.’

I have nothing to add to my simple history of ‘The Shipwrecked Bible,’ but an earnest prayer that it may lead some of my readers to present to their seafaring friends a parting gift of equal value. A gift which if rightly used will be to them a chart, a compass, and a pilot, by whose aid they may finally cast anchor in the blessed Haven of Eternal Rest !

Carnarvon, March 14th.

J. L. W.

VERSE SYSTEM.

1st. Week, v. 20 to Chap. xiii. v. 3. Herod's pride and awful death ; Barnabas and Saul return to Jerusalem ; and, according to the direction of the Holy Ghost, are solemnly set apart by the Ministers of the Church at Antioch to go to the Gentiles.

Verse 20. The wrath of such a king as Herod is indeed "as messengers of death." Tyre and Sidon being great trading cities (*Isai. xxiiii. Ezek. xxvii.*), depended upon the fruitful country of Judæa for its supplies of wheat, &c., (*1 Kings v. 11, Ezek. xxvii. 17*) and therefore wisely endeavour to pacify his wrath in the best manner they can.

Verse 21. This was the proud King's set day for making a shew of his wealth and power ; but it was a day set apart by the KING OF KINGS to humble that pride, to avenge the blood of his Saints, and to leave a lasting lesson to the great men of the earth, whoever they may be, what they really are before "the blasting of the breath of his displeasure."

Verse 23. The reason given for this solemn act of God's judgment is worthy of remark. We have no notice here taken of his cruel persecution of the saints, or his other abominable iniquities, but because "he gave not God the glory"—instead of rejecting with indignation the wicked flattery of his servile admirers, he permits them to rob God of the glory due only to his Name ; he drinks in the intoxicating draught of popular applause ; and in the moment when that draught had bewildered him into the fancy that he might be something more than mortal, a more than commonly loathsome and humbling disease sinks him as far below the common lot of men as this impious vox populi had before placed him above it. The case of

Belshazzar, Isai. xiv. 12—20, and Dan. v. throughout, and of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 29, 33, illustrates this. “An angel smote him.” 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. 2, Kings xix. 35.

Verse 25. Chap. xi. v. 30.

Verse 1—3. Whilst engaged in their work as Ministers, and doubtless, in prayer and fasting looking for farther direction, they are solemnly charged to separate Barnabas and Saul for their peculiar work, the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles; for though Saul had before this received his authority from Christ himself, yet he had not been publicly known or acknowledged as such by the Church. Hence we may learn that whilst God the Holy Spirit alone can separate Ministers for their work by the calling and qualifications of his grace, there must also be a calling and acknowledgment of them as such by the Church. When this Apostolical precedent is neglected, a door is opened to confusion and every evil work.

2nd Week v. 4—10. They arrive at Seleucia, Cyprus; preach at Salamis; meet with Bar-jesus at Paphos, who endeavours to prevent Sergius Paulus from receiving the truth, and is opposed by Saul.

Verse 6. As it was the office of the *true* Prophets which Christ gave to his Churches in those days (1 Cor. xii. 10, 28. Ephes. iv. 11, &c.) to exercise both the ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, in foretelling things to come, and in expounding the will and word of God, doubtless the *false* prophet pretended to do the same. Christ warned his disciples of such, Luke xxi. 8. Theudas, and Judas might have deceived in this way, Acts v. 36. So Jannes and Jambres, the Egyptian Magicians, withstood Moses (2 Tim. iii. 8.) The name Bar-jesus, i. e. the son

healing or salvation; if it was not given to him or taken by him in consequence of his pretended powers, at least may shew how fit a person he was (by his wily arts as a Sorcerer pretending to the gifts of healing; and as a *false* prophet pretending to be able to shew the way of salvation) to impose upon an enquirer after truth.

Verse 7. "a prudent man"—a man of sound understanding, a kind of Gamaliel in his way, who wished to hear what could be said in behalf of this new doctrine. Probably an enquirer, which may account for his having such a person as Elymas about him. Note, Drowning men catch at a twig, and awakened consciences will naturally take up with the first that comes that professes to be able to give them ease; this often gives opportunity to the wily sons of Elymas to bewitch them from the truth, (Galat. iii. 1.) as well as to the lying sons of Bar-jesus to prophecy deceit, while it opens an affectual door for the Sauls and Banabases of our day to rush in with all the powerful simplicity and all-abounding consolation of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Verse 9, 10. We find our Blessed Lord using similar words, Matt. iii. 7. xxiii. 13—33. xiii 28. John viii. 44, and with the same accusation, Matt. xxiii. 13. The Apostle spoke "filled with the Holy Ghost," exercising the gift of "discerning of spirits." (1 Cor. xii. 10)

3rd Week, v. 11—17. Elymas struck blind; the Deputy believes; Paul and his company sail to Perga, thence to Antioch in Pisidia; invited to exhort in the synagogue; stands up and opens his sermon with the history of God's dealings with the Jews in Egypt.

Verse 11, 12. A suitable punishment, that he who had acted as a ready agent of "the god of this world who blindeth the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine" into

Sergius Paulus' heart, should himself be deprived of the glorious light of the natural sun. Happy if the mercy remembered in the midst of judgment, which those words "for a season" seem to imply, led him to repentance. At all events we have great cause for praise that the Deputy was thus delivered from his soul-destroying snares.

Verse 15. It was the custom in the worship of the Jewish synagogue to read a portion out of "the law and the Prophets," (Acts xv. 21.) in the same way as we read the first and second lesson, and having finished this, the ruler of the synagogue appears to have called upon whom he pleased to preach to the people. So we read of our Blessed Lord, Luke iv. 16.



POETRY.

ON SEEING A THRUSH SINGING EARLY
ON A SPRING MORNING

INNOCENT Bird ! That on the larch tree top
With cheering lay didst usher in the dawn,
Chiding their indolence whose thankless souls
Ne'er give a morning sacrifice to Heaven.

Thou'rt singing there as birds in Eden sung,
 When all was good, and happiest of all
 Man led the chorus of the new-born world.
 Unconscious of the change thy strains are sweet
 As tho' 'twere Eden still ; nor sin had op'd
 The door to death ; nor yet to vanity
 Man's grievous fall had all creation doom'd.
 I envy thy gay fearlessness of ill—
 Those joyous feelings—which the voice of spring
 Inspires in sinless bosoms ; when she wakes
 Her sleeping flowers, and bids nature smile.
 I too can feel the influence of spring :
 And oh that void of care, from duties free,
 And unreproach'd by quickly flying time,
 I could indulge as once in childhood's hour ;
 When life flow'd fresh—existence was enjoyment ;
 Wand'ring in budding woods, or by the stream,
 Or idly basking on the sunny hedge
 Gaz'd into flow'rs, and listened to the bee.
 Calm is the dappled sky—and fields and woods
 Are calm—glittering with dew—nature is calm :
 And ev'ry insect sporting in the air
 Seems but to tell me of the love of God.
 Yes ! all is grateful ! save unhappy man ;
 Reckless of scenes which contemplation loves,
 Some are now snoozing on their fev'rish bed ;
 Or, squalid peaking from the smoky room,
 Poison with spirit fumes the breath of morn.
 The spell is o'er—jarring with songs of birds
 I hear th' enormous oath—the vacant laugh—
 And all the tumult of a guilty world.
 Sing on poor gentle bird ! soon thou may'st learn
 That earth is sin-struck—that creation groans.
 Thy clay-built nest sock'd by the wanton breeze,
 May soon be storm'd by fierce instinctive foes,
 Or tyrant school-boy brutal more than they.
 'Twill not be ever thus. Nor violence,
 Nor Satan, sin, and death reign o'er the world.
 There stands a promise of the faithful God,
 "Behold I make New Heavens and New Earth,"
 And joys of Paradise be known again.

Liskeard, April, 1833.

TRE.

REV. H. A. SIMCOE, (Penheale-Press) Cornwall.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

or,

The Cornish Parochial Visitor.

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[VOL. II.



THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

No. IX.

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

'Thus in the train of Spring arrive
Sweet Flowers; what living eye hath viewed
Their myriads? Endlessly renewed,
Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray.'

NATURE is ever changing, ever beautiful; but perhaps the richest feast which it presents to the eye at this season is to be found in the Flower Garden. Not, indeed; that the productions of the fields and hedges are undeserving of our regard, for in Devonshire and

Cornwall, at least, there is no lack of those sweet and lovely wild flowers which may form a rich and even splendid nosegay. Still, however, art wisely displays its taste in selecting some of the choicest of these, and also in intermingling them with the more curious and brilliant productions of other lands. We have always regarded the pleasure that is taken in cultivating a Flower Garden as more like that enjoyed by the first man in Paradise, than any other kind of earthly pleasure ; and hence we have always been accustomed to consider the pains that are taken in the collection and nurture of a variety of choice flowers, as well bestowed : and affording a better omen of industry, cheerfulness, and a degree of comfort unknown in former times, than any other outward circumstance. The neat cottage garden, of which we see so many examples in Cornwall, gay and smiling, as it looks at this season, with some of the most splendid productions of the East—the Tulip, the Anemone, and the Ranunculus—is a sight most gratifying to the mind as well as to the eye, for it tells of peace, and security, and of those blessings with which Providence has so richly crowned our land by commerce. We may generally, perhaps, form some notion of the character and situation of the inhabitants of a cottage, by looking at the little garden in front of it. Where there is nothing of this sort, we may be almost sure to meet with poverty in its worst form, if not with ignorance and vice. It would be delightful, therefore, to see every cottage with its proper ornament of a few beds of flowers to gladden the eye of the owner, and to bespeak his sense of the beauties and wonders which the Divine Hand has so richly lavished upon this part of the creation.

Flowers are, indeed, among the most interesting of those productions which display the exquisite skill and boundless wisdom of the Infinite Mind. Their variety astonishes, as much as their beauty captivates us. Every country has its peculiar species. Some of these love the burning suns of India; some the barren deserts of Africa; and America and New Holland are as much distinguished by flowers of singular and rare beauty as by their animals, which differ greatly from those of all the rest of the globe. Then, again, there are some flowers which are the natives only of temperate climates, and a few are confined to the snowy regions of the North. Each has also its own select situation and soil; some choose the mountain, and some the valley; some flourish best in poor ground, and many are to be found only in the richest pastures. Nor are they less remarkable for their different qualities. In some are combined the qualities of fragrance and beauty; but those which have little of the latter, have often valuable properties as medicine. Even those which were formerly esteemed poisonous, are now found to be useful to the skilful Physician, and class among the most beneficial of his remedies. In short, every combination of beauty and utility that the mind can conceive, and far more than it could have imagined, is to be found in those flowers which are so widely scattered over the fair face of the whole earth, as if for the express purpose of awakening man's attention every where to the beauty of the works of God, and convincing him that the same Almighty Wisdom interests itself in the small as in the great things of the universe; shewing itself no less in the ornaments with which it has decked the earth, than in those stupendous orbs of light with which his Spirit hath garnished the heavens.

It is not, however, a mere admiration of the beauties of the Flower Garden that we recommend to our readers. The Christian Naturalist sees in the variety, and beauty of its productions, a pleasing picture of the vast diversity of character which adorns the members of the Church of Christ. The brilliant hues of some flowers, and the sweet fragrance of others, aptly represent those who adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things, and whose example diffuses the sweet savour of life and salvation to all around them. But there are others of a humbler class, which have peculiar excellencies of their own, which the skilful eye of the observer can trace with as much ease as the experienced florist discerns the beauties of his favorite flowers. In the Christian Church the gifts and graces of men widely differ. Some are adapted to adorn one station of life, and some another; these to flourish best in the humble valley of life, and others to bear the rough blasts of the mountain. The soil of poverty is best suited to unfold the qualities of some, and others flourish well amidst the strong sunshine of prosperity, and the fertile soil in which their lot has been planted. All, however, are alike nourished by the same general means of grace, though the Spirit " divideth to every man severally as he will;" but prayer, the breath of heaven, is the atmosphere in which *all* must live. All must be baptized and watered by the same Spirit, and be fed with a due portion of the wholesome food of God's word. Thus nurtured and strengthened, every member of the Church in his proper season and place, like the flowers of the garden, adorns the situation which he fills, becomes a bright and beautiful example of godliness in his particular sphere of duty, and

abundantly proclaims the wisdom and goodness of him Who transplanted him from the wilderness of this world, to a place where he may adorn and magnify the riches of divine grace.

If our contemplations in a Flower Garden thus remind us of spiritual things, it will not be without profit that we shall walk there at this delightful season. To see God in these his beautiful works is one object which a true Christian will ever keep in view; and to see Christ, the God-man, in the glory of his Church, is another which every thing in nature will assist him to do if he views it rightly through the glass of Scripture. Our blessed Lord himself, in the days of his flesh, looked upon the flowers around him, with as deep and intense a feeling of admiration as any of his followers are capable of expressing: "Consider," said he, "the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Math. vi. 28—30.) What a striking comparison is this, and how beautifully is the anxiety of the disciples about their raiment reproved by a simple reference to the Divine care which is bestowed even upon the perishable productions of a day! How gentle and yet at the same time how forcible the admonition which is thus conveyed to the heart of the weak believer! In what an endearing light does the concern and sympathy of his Heavenly Father display itself towards him when he looks at the lilies, and is taught to remember that the prodigality of skill and beauty

which is lavished upon them affords but a faint idea of the merciful Providence which is so constantly, and so richly engaged in behalf of him, and of all his temporal as well as spiritual concerns! What a beautiful school of piety then is the Flower Garden when viewed in this light! Here let the Christian learn what flower he most resembles in the graces of his character. Here also while he sees the vanity and frailty of human life pictured forth in the flowers which so soon perish, let him learn more and more the necessity of faith in him, and conformity to his character, who was once the noblest flower in the garden of God's Church—the emblem of all that is sweet and lovely—the pattern of all true dignity and humility—"the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys." (Sol. Song. ii. 1.)

Oh! how earnestly must the Christian look forward to the period when, in all the glory of his person and in all the riches of his grace, man shall every where see and admire that Saviour "who is the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely!" Then with infinitely more satisfaction than the delighted florist now gazes upon his choicest flowers, shall the enraptured Church exclaim in the glowing language of the Canticles, iv. 16, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." And then will be realized in all its glory and universality the truth of the prophecy, "The Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." (Isaiah li. 3.) E. B.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Excuse the liberty I take, a personal stranger, of addressing you. The day before yesterday I had the pleasure of dining at the table of Rev. ——, of Chelsea, who put into my hands a little Periodical published by you, called, ‘Light from the West,’ in which number (November, 1832) I found a recommendation of the ‘Verse System.’ I have long been a verse learner according to this System, and cannot say too much in its favor. I left America (the land of my nativity and residence) in December, and can assure you the friends of the System there grow more and more attached to it, and that its practical effects are dear to the Christian’s heart. It was my privilege to be connected with the little band of Christian brethren, who, from a remote frontier village, sent abroad into the world a knowledge of the System. I mention these facts for no other purpose than to show you that I could not but receive with *sincere joy* the tidings that the System had found friends in Cornwall, and that your little Periodical had kindly noticed and welcomed it. Very many facts of great and touching interest have come to my knowledge in connexion with the use of the plan, and it is really astonishing to see the power of this simple moral engine when brought to bear upon a community. I have not time or health to enlarge. Your Correspondent in the November No. has, however, touched upon the secret of its success in the following words:—‘But the most interesting feature is, THE PRAYERS that are daily going up to God in connexion with it—the *united prayers* of those real Christians who join in it, in behalf of those fellow-

members on whose hearts the spirit of living prayer hath not as yet been poured out from on high !

This feature is indeed ‘the most interesting.’ Ever since I heard of the charming System, this heavenly ‘feature’ has moved and rejoiced my heart; it being *understood*, as your Correspondent says, that Christian Verse learners shall daily pray for all others in every land who are committing the daily verse—See that poor idolater on the far off shores of China. His restless countenance tells us he is thirsting for happiness. He finds it not in the world; and in his religion he receives no spiritual peace. To-day some friendly Christian hands him a little slip of paper on which are written THE VERSES for the year, and begs him to read them day by day, and ponder upon them. To-day he reads the daily verse.

Now cast a glance to America and England. In many and many a closet there are Christian Verse learners prostrate before the Great Hearer of Prayer. What do they ask for? Do they ask personal blessings alone? or personal salvation alone? No, they pray that ‘wherever a human mind is brought in contact with to-day’s verse, that it may be blessed of God to such mind.’

The idolater is beside the fountain of life, and united prayer is made in many a land that he may drink to the salvation of his soul. Will he not drink? The thought to me is most delightful, for, to drop the figure, the idolater is using means which God can consistently bless, and will bless according to his gracious promises. There is something most ravishing in this thought when followed out

Believe me, your Christian Brother,

ONE THING IS NEEDFUL.

SIR.—Though your Light professes to be from the West, it will not, I am sure, refuse communications from other quarters; but will rather rejoice to gain additional strength from hearing of the blessed effects produced in other places by the rays of that Sun of Righteousness, which alone has power to pierce through the gloom spread around us by sin and ignorance.

Blessed, indeed, are the people that know the joyful sound! Happy are we as a nation in having this glorious light amidst us. And though our eyes may overflow with tears at the sight of the many that will not see, yet should our hearts be filled with gratitude and joy when we are permitted to see even one sinner brought out of darkness into light.

Permit me therefore to relate one instance of this happy change; imperfect as the attempt may prove, it is made at least in the hope of contributing some little in the great cause. A word has often come in season to my own mind while reading your little work. May what I now write be of use to some one.

Your readers must accompany me many miles from the West, to a little hamlet at a short distance from the city of _____. The scenery is not like that of Cornwall, wide and extensive, carrying the eye over a large tract, which, though for the most part barren, fills the mind with delight and admiration at the greatness of the Creator's works. Who that has been accustomed only to the flat and bounded prospects of the more inland parts of England, can stand for the first time on the summit of one of your Cornish hills, without experiencing a sensation altogether new? The extensiveness of the view produces the idea, I might

almost say, of sublimity in the mind. It does not, it is true, present that picture of wealth and fertility which appear in the more favored portions of our land. The treasures of Cornwall must be sought for. Thus it is with more lasting riches—we must seek them diligently. The Scriptures are one vast extent of truths, bounded only by Eternity; yet if we would profit by them, we must dig for them as for hid treasure.

But though so different to Western scenery, the situation of my little hamlet is very pleasing of its kind. It stands on a rising ground, commanding a fine view of ——, with its many spires and lofty towers, from which the river slowly winds along, and by its frequent overflowing causes the large fertile meadows on its bank to look green even in winter. In the distance are some scattered villages, and behind an extensive woodland. The cottages are mostly thatched, some neat and comfortable in their appearance, others whose very outside bespeak the misery and disorder to be found within. The most interesting object is a small Chapel of Ease, which has been built but a short time. The inhabitants had been for many years without the means of public worship, except, indeed, they walked to a greater distance than many are disposed to do who know not the treasures of the word. And but for a Sunday-school, built about twenty years ago, there is every cause to fear that the most lamentable ignorance would have been found amongst them. Very few of them ever went to Church, or attended any place of worship; so the general state of their lives and conversations may be concluded to have been anything but happy and peaceful. For how can people be happy who know nothing of the way of Salvation?

And how shall they know that way without hearing of it? O how much real pleasure these persons lose, who, instead of keeping holy the Sabbath-day, and going with the multitude to worship the Lord in his temple, are either seeking their own pleasure and working hard in the service of their deceitful enemy, or else wasting the day of peace in stupid slothfulness! O that they were wise, that they would believe it is in love to their souls we would urge them to "Seek the Lord while he may be found." We know how unhappy they are; we know how bitter their state of bondage is. Such once were we. But having been made to feel the great love of God in sending his Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life, we are anxious to see others seeking unto that Saviour, who will in no wise cast out them that come unto him.

Would that this sad neglect of assembling together were to be found only where Churches are far off, but how sadly is it the case even in places where the Church is within very sight, where the Glad Tidings of peace are plainly and faithfully preached, where the Holy Scriptures are read, and the prayers of poor sinners offered up through the mediation of a merciful High Priest.

Your readers will not think these remarks personal. They may travel many miles from the West, and still find the picture a true one.

But to return to my village. It is but a poor place, as you will be told should you make one of the cottages a resting-place in your walk. There are but few families in it that are even 'well to do,' as they call it. Yet there are some even of the poorest looking dwellings,

that are endeared to the mind as containing precious jewels, even souls brought out of the bondage of sin into the glorious liberty of the children of God. There are some who are endeavouring to bring up their children in the knowledge of the Lord ; and who assemble morning and evening to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to intreat a continuance of his mercies. True, there are not many even in this small flock of whom this may be said ; yet even *one* such family is a blessing to the neighbourhood. They were once even as others, walking in darkness, seeking peace where there is no peace. But God in his infinite mercy sent to them his messenger. They liked him not at first, for “the carnal mind is at enmity with God.” They resisted the bitter truth that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They could not think that they were naturally as bad as others, even as those looked upon by the world as sinners. Yet there were some truths which they could not dispute. They felt they were not happy; they knew they had never been so. They felt, too, that they were not good; yet, though too proud to confess it even to themselves, they felt it was this which made them tremble to appear in the presence of that Being who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. It was this fear of death which had all their life-time kept them in bondage ; it was this which, like an inward flame, had consumed every false prop of the peace that the world and their own deceitful hearts had vainly built up. When the preacher described the broken and defiled cisterns out of which they had been seeking their happiness, they felt the truth. When he spoke of the fountain of living waters springing up in the hearts of those who believe in

Jesus, they could not help wishing that they had come unto that Fountain. When he declared the willingness of God to receive sinners, they trembled, yet there was hope. The word of God had pierced to the very depth of the wound. Through grace they felt the cause of that disease which had been a heavy burden upon them from their childhood ; they felt their helplessness, and their misery ; they felt their need of a Saviour ; and though they went sorrowful many days, the Lord, in his own good time, gave them a portion of that “ peace which passeth all understanding.”

The feeling of their still remaining corruption is now their greatest source of grief : yet they can cling with childlike confidence to his gracious promises, who has enabled them to say, “Our Father.”

What I have been saying may appear to some too highly pictured ; but those who have felt the same will confess that words cannot describe the workings of a mind that has heard for the first time the gospel of peace, and received it as from above. The world may deride, friends may lament their delusion, as it will be thought, and their former companions may shun them ; yet they have set to their seal that God is true. They have been led to feel that for themselves there is no salvation, but in Christ. They will experience the truth of these words, “ If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” And that, “ if ye were of the world,” &c. Yes, they must continue through evil as well as good report. Yet, though for the present, the prospect may be clouded, and every sunny spot dimmed by the shadows of the dark valley through which is their appointed way, let them keep looking towards the dawn-

ing of a brighter day. "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, though behind is as the desolate wilderness."

I fear I have drawn these remarks to a tedious length, but the mind is loth to quit the place whence still, as it were, it hears the voice of joy and gladness. May the little Church of —— be still, in the emphatic words of one of its faithful Ministers, 'A Bethlehem,' a house of bread to many a weary soul, hungering for the bread of life. There is a poor old woman I wish

(*To be concluded in our next.*)



WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 112.)

1. Look well to *sincerity*. This is the blood and vital spirit, which runs through the veins of every grace, without which it is not what it seems to be; faith is not faith, unless it be unfeigned, and what may seem to be love is not so, unless it be sincere. Sincerity is that principle in the heart which complies with the quickening grace of God, as the vital spirit in a plant with the beams of the sun, which does not only make it stand, but grow against the injuries of the weather. It was God's manner long ago to have a special respect to sincerity; "Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doer." (Job viii. 20.) He will not despise or turn away himself. If a sincere man falls, he will reach out his hand to lift him up, as the antithesis manifests. The word being in the Hebrew, he will not take the evil doer by the hand, implying that he holds the other, and raises him up.

It is our sincerity in withstanding the sins and temptations of the world, that the promise of perfect sanctification is made to ; "Thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white," (Rev. iii. 4, 5,) they shall be clothed in white. An allusion to the Jewish custom of admitting the priests into their office, by clothing them with white as a badge of their office and continuance in the priesthood. "Job held fast his integrity." (Job ii. 3.) And that was a means to preserve and recover him. Uncompounded things are least subject to putrefaction, whereas mixed bodies easily ferment and corrupt; sincerity can never be feeble, because the spirit of power always attends it ; "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. i. 7.) The apostle couples them both together. A single respect to Christ in the midst of shaking persecution, is both an evidence of the strong touch of the heart by the Spirit, and a preservative against apostacy ; as the standing right of the needle in the compass, in the midst of the winds which toss the ship, manifests its powerful touch by the loadstone, and is a means to direct it in its course, and preserve it from a wreck.

2. Get a stock of *spiritual knowledge*, and actuate it often. The grave, considering Christian will stand, when the hot-headed professor, like horses of the same temper, will jade and sink under the rider in a few miles. Men whose religion consists rather in a commotion of their passions, than a judicious and considerate determination of their wills, will quickly flag ; hot beginners are not durable, violent motions, either in naturals or morals, are not perpetual ; get the

experience of every truth you hear. Experimental knowledge is the true ballast of the soul, when mere sound and air is a rolling and moveable thing. Mere head professors are as light as a cork dancing upon every dash of water. An experimental taste of the grace of God, *viz.* that grace of Christ which produces a *coming* to him, is a means to be “built up a spiritual house; if so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” (1 Pet. ii. 3, 4, 5.) It must be a taste, not only the hearing of a sound; it is not enough, to be sound in judgment, but *spiritual in taste.* (Col. i. 23.) Skilful musicians, who understand the delicacy of the airs in a tune, will chain their ears to the sound, when an unskilful person will listen, and stare a while, and run away. Our valuations of God are according to the degrees of our knowledge, and our cleavings to him according to the degrees of our estimations of him.

Actuate it often. Let thy knowledge sink down to thy will, and lie ready by thee, to bring forth new and old upon any exigency. The forgetting the precepts and promises of God, is the cause of fainting. (Heb. xii. 5.) “Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy time, and strength of salvation.” (Isa. xxxiii. 6.) As this makes the kingdom of Christ stable in the world, so it will the kingdom of grace in our souls. Get therefore, and actuate a knowledge of the tenor of the covenant, the substances of the promises, the nature and ends of Christ’s mediation. “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ.” (2 Tim. ii. 1, 3.) Have a right understanding of the covenant of grace, which is manifested in and by Christ, of the stock of grace stored up in Christ. This will make you endure

hardship as the soldiers of Christ ; this will make you high-spirited in the acting of your faith, and please before God, without which both your faith and prayers will be very faint and languishing.

(*To be Continued.*)

RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS.

CHAPTER I.

DRUIDICAL IDOLATRY.

In giving a brief history of the rise and fall, the progress and preservation of true religion in Britain, it is both instructive and profitable to enquire,—What was the religion of our ancestors before the introduction of Christianity ? We do so the rather in these distempered times to convince the unbeliever that it is not owing to education which is not Christian, or civilization, that we are not now bowing down to dumb idols and practicing the most bloody rites, but simply to the grace of God which has made us to differ. We do so to raise in the pious breast feelings of gratitude, love, and praise to the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation for the light of his glorious Gospel. To stir us all up in these levelling and falsely called liberal times to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to hand down, pure and uncorrupted to our posterity, that form of sound words and doctrine which still, through mercy, is preserved amongst us in the Established Church of our land.

The religion of our ancestors was idolatry in its most debased form. They had gods many and lords many. Trees, rivers, hills, and mountains, yea even

the Devil himself, appears to have been an object of their adoration. Their principal idols were Belinus the great, the Baal of the Phœnicians ; Andraste, the goddess of victory ; and Diana the goddess of hunting. In addition to these, the Druids, the priests of that day, pretended to the knowledge of the One Supreme Almighty, and infinitely wise God ; but it was rather a creature of their own imagination, than the holy, just and merciful God made known in the Bible.* It appears they held an opinion that the soul existed after death, that it was either happy or miserable according to their conduct, good or bad in life, but its happiness consisted not in being united to a glorified body, or in the enjoyment of the Christian's heaven, but in passing into a body which was freed from suffering for ever. On the other hand they believed if evil had been their choice the soul was doomed to drudgery in the bodies of the inferior animals, reptiles and insects. The bare relation of absurdities such as these, while it shows us the darkness in which the heathen world was and still is, should lead us to adore Him who has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, who has left us in no doubt concerning the immortality of the soul, nor the perfect bliss of the redeemed in Heaven.

All systems of religion, not from God, have ever been upheld by artifice and fraud ; accordingly we find the Druids, in order to insure the obedience of the people, erected logging or rocking stones, by which they pretended to know the will of the gods. These stones (some of which still exist in our county of Cornwall) were cunningly fitted one upon another, so that when the upper one was touched in a certain place, only with

* Fuller's *Church History*, Cap. I.

the finger, it would rock, whereas no strength of man could avail to move it if applied to any other part; by this was signified the approbation or disapprobation of the gods. Again, in order the better to secure the payment of tribute; at the commencement of winter, on a certain day, the priests commanded the fire in every dwelling to be put out; and if it was again kindled in any way, except from the sacred fire of the Druids, the house would be unfortunate during the coming year. But all this was harmless in comparison of the bloody rites they practised. They literally made the people pass through the fire in honour of Baal, and otherwise offered the life of man in sacrifice. So great, indeed, was the credulity of the people, that it was believed future events were to be discovered by the manner in which the blood flowed, and by the writhings of the victim in the agonies of death. If a chief was sick, the life of a fellow-creature was the price of his redemption. If any great calamity threatened the nation, or wars were to be undertaken, the gods were only to be rendered propitious by the shedding of human blood. It was on occasions such as these that a huge figure of wicker work, in the rude likeness of a man, was filled with offenders against the laws; or if enough were not to be found, innocent persons were thrust in, and the figure, being surrounded by wood and straw, was set fire to and burnt with all whom it contained. It is said that naked women, besmeared with a dark purple die, assisted in these bloody rites.* Surely if the Jew who sacrificed unworthily, although the sacrifice was according to the express appointment of Jehovah himself, was accounted no other than the slayer of a

* Southey's Book of the Church, Cap. I.

dog,* how abominable must these have appeared in the eyes of him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.



Thus we have shewn that England once was one of the dark places of the earth, and, consequently, that it was full of the habitations of cruelty and wretchedness. Industry in cultivating the soil, the blessing which every where attends Christianity, was unknown, and our forefathers were dependant on their skill in hunting and fishing for a precarious sustenance. Thus exposed to all the miseries of a savage state of life; without one comfort of a social or domestic nature; ground down, and enslaved by a debasing idolatry;

* Isaiah lxvi. 3.

in a word, without one ray of hope here or hereafter; they dragged on a miserable existence from generation to generation.

[*To be Continued.*]

VERSE SYSTEM.

4th Week (May) v. 18—25. The Apostle continues his Sermon, tracing the history of God's dealings from Moses to Christ, in order to prove that that Jesus whom he preached was the very Messiah whom their Scriptures taught them to expect.

1st Week, v. 26—34. He relates the fact of Jesus' death and resurrection, shewing it to be the fulfilment of various prophecies.

Verse 34. "The sure mercies of David;" (Isai. iv. 3, 4) even those covenanted mercies of salvation by Christ—the true David—which are made sure to his believing people only by his resurrection. (1 Cor. xv.) Not only is David a well known type of Christ, but Christ himself is often called by that name (which means *beloved*) in the Prophets. (Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, xxvii. 24, 25, Hosea iii. 5, &c.)

2nd Week, v. 35—40. Concludes his Sermon with a solemn caution to despisers of Christ and his Gospel.

Verse 36. "Served his own generation;" glorified God in the situation in which he had fixed him; did all the good he could in the day in which he lived, as a servant of God; the simple duty of every believer whether King or beggar.

Verse 39. There were many sins for which the law of Moses did not provide any expiation, and under the guilt of which the offender must die without mercy. How glorious the news that for the believer in Jesus

there was "now no condemnation" for any! That the better sacrifice than these, the blood of Jesus, cleanseth from all sin! Full and free 'justification by faith only' is indeed a wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort' for a Minister to preach and for a people to hear.

Verse 40, 41. Isai. xxix. 14, Habb. i. 5, to which add Isai. v. 24, xxx. 12—22, xxviii. 14—22, and Prov. i. 24—31, and we have enough to make the stoutest Gospel despiser's heart to quail.

3rd Week, 42—48. The Gentiles request the repetition of the sermon. Envy of the Jews leads them to oppose. Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles, who rejoice in the word, and many of them believe.

Verse 43. We find Barnabas employed in his old work as in Chap. xi. 23, exhorting them to hold fast their profession, and dependance on that Gospel of grace which they had received. So the Apostle Paul tells his Galatian Church that those who were justified by the law, (that is who sought to be so) were fallen from grace, that is from the Gospel which justifies by grace; on which account the Gospel is often called "the grace of God." (Acts xiv. 8, xx. 24, Rom. vi. 14, Coloss. i. 6, Titus ii. 11, 1 Peter v. 12, &c.)

Verse 44, 45. The same sight which fills adoring Angels with joy, and anxious Ministers with gratitude, fills hell with spleen and malice, and stirs up the enmity of the carnal mind. The character which Christ gives of these same persons in his day (Matth. xxiii. 13) is still found true. From this awful picture of human nature, we may form some idea of what will be the hellish envy of proud and Gospel-despising sinners when they shall see Heaven filled with those saints whom now they scorn, and themselves for ever cast out!

Verse 46. "Judge yourselves unworthy." The

Jews, by their rejection of the Gospel, passed sentence upon themselves that they ought not to be saved. How fearful is the thought that every soul that despises God's method of salvation must clear the righteousness of Jehovah's dealings before an assembled world, by signing, as it were, with his own hand the justice of his own condemnation in that day.

Verse 47. "So hath the Lord commanded." Chap. i. 8, ix. 15, xxii. 21, xxvi. 17, 18, Matt. xxviii. 19. "I have set thee." Isai. xl ix. 6.

Verse 49. "Glorified the word of the Lord;" praised that word which brought them such good tidings of salvation for them as *Gentiles*.

"And as many as were ordained," &c. by this we see, 1st. That it is very possible to glorify the word of God—admire it as a lovely and blessed sound; without receiving it by a saving faith as able to make wise unto salvation. 2dly. That the same Lord that has ordained the end—eternal life—has also ordained the means, faith in Christ ; as many therefore as, according to the everlasting purpose of God, were appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,* 'by his Spirit working in due season did, through grace, obey the calling,'† believing "to the saving of the soul."‡

4th Week, v. 49 to Chap. xiv. 3. The progress of the Gospel stirs up the enmity of the Jews, who raise a party against them, and expel them from their coasts. They go to Iconium, where they experience the same success, and the same enmity.

Verse 50. "Devout and honourable women;" women of rank and influence, who having, probably, been recently converted from Heathenism to Judaism, were, as the Apostle himself in days gone by, possessed with a "zeal for God" but not according to knowledge.

* 1 Thess. v. 9. † 17th Article Church of England. ‡ Heb. x. 39.



THE SAILOR AND HIS BIBLE.

Loud blew the winds ! the foaming billows roll'd,
When from St. Minver head we could descry
A ship that labour'd with the boist'rous waves,
Now sunk in depths, now riding mountains high.
Hark ! 'twas the signal of extreme distress,
And fancy heard heart-rending cries on board ;
But ah ! nor boat, nor man, could venture forth,
Nor to the call the least relief afford.
Broke was the cable, and the vessel bulg'd,
A perfect wreck she lay upon the wave ;
And down we saw the screaming suff'rers sink,
Ingulf'd together in a wat'ry grave.
One yet surviv'd : to the mainmast he clung,
The dashing waves around the sailor pour ;
Entangled in the cordage and the shrouds,
Half-naked, and half-drown'd, he reach'd the shore.
Around his waist a bandage strait was seen,
Which seem'd t' enclose a treasure highly priz'd ;
Some said his wealth, his little all was there,
Or the ship's secret papers, some surmised.
But soon the sailor's hidden pearl appeared:
With mingled pleasure and surprize we found,
It was his Bible in a pocket clos'd,
Firmly secur'd and to his body bound. . . . D. GRIFFITHS..

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

OR,

The Cornish Parochial Visitor.

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THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

No. X.

SUMMER.

THE course of the seasons has now brought us to Summer; a part of the year in which we may see abundant reason to admire and bless the divine hand which now unlocks all the treasures of creation, and displays its infinite resources of grandeur, beauty, and fertility. If Spring is the season of expectation, Summer is the season of enjoyment. Nature now brings rapidly to perfection the various productions of the earth upon which the sustenance of man and

the inferior animals depends. The Sun has reached his highest throne in the heavens, and, like the monarch of all he surveys, seems to look down with the full pomp and pride of his beams upon this lower world which lies basking in his smiles. Whatever are the other provisions which the Creator has made for man in his Providence, surely all these would be worth but little were it not for the animating presence of this great orb of light and life. At all seasons of the year we feel the benefits of this luminary, and hail his light as the first best blessing of the works of God: but Summer is the season when we are most fully sensible of our obligations to that degree of warmth and vitality which he sheds down upon the earth and its inhabitants. It is now that the sublime language of the Psalmist is especially verified: "He cometh forth as a Bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course; his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

It is, perhaps, to the too abstract consideration of the unnumbered benefits derived from the Sun as the great and main agent to whom we are indebted for every blessing that Summer skies afford, that the Gentile nations have been so ready to fall into the awful and pernicious idolatry of paying their homage to this glorious specimen of the Creator's power, rather than to the Creator himself. Our privilege it is as Christians to thank God that we have been kept from this idolatry, and to shew that we are fully sensible to whom we owe our obligations, while we are thus permitted to behold his beams shining upon us,—

‘To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence.’

In looking at the Sun our thoughts should at this season more peculiarly resort to him who is the Father of Lights,—

‘Nature’s immortal immaterial SUN’—

who reveals himself in his word as the Sun as well as Shield of his people ; who is Light, and dwelleth in Light; and who, though he will not give his glory to another, has expressly directed our thoughts to him who is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person. The rising of this great spiritual luminary upon the world was reserved for the New Testament dispensation, and the present part of it may be considered as the Summer season of God’s Church ; and the realization of the famous prophecy of Malachi, “ Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.”

If, indeed, in contemplating this great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, we are struck with wonder and astonishment, our thoughts may naturally turn also to the mystery which envelopes the solar orb. Surely if we cannot comprehend the material image of the Creator and the Redeemer, how much less can we presume to know of that Great Being himself who is the cause of causes and the power of powers ; by whose word it is that all the wheels of nature are kept in continual motion through the agency of the Sun as the main-spring, or central wheel, of the whole system. Let those who deny the doctrine of Christ’s Godhead, because they cannot reason upon it, explain to us first the mysteries of the natural world. Let them tell us, what is Light ? and whether it is a part of the Sun, or something wholly distinct from it. Philosophers have written much upon the laws of light ;

but after all that has been said, its essence is as much unknown to us as the essence of God himself. This, therefore, may teach us caution in judging of divine things, "For who by searching can find out God?"

But the Christian Naturalist would not forget the earth, with its tribes of living beings all gay and full of animation, and its beautiful kingdoms of vegetable nature, all spread out like a splendid picture to feast the eye, to fill the mind, and to awaken the gratitude of man that was once crowned king and lord of all this lower creation. Wherever he looks at this season he sees innumerable beings animated with life, and apparently rejoicing in their existence. The Swallow, with the swiftness of an arrow, darts through the air, and reminds him, by the regularity of its return, of that law of instinct which so forcibly rebukes the inconstancy and carelessness of man towards his Maker. See Jeremiah viii. 7. The Bee buzzes from flower to flower to gather honey for its winter store, as if to give us a beautiful example of industry and prudent foresight. And even the little Ant, so laboriously working at this season, teaches a lesson to the sluggard which Solomon thought worth inculcating. Prov. vi. 6. So also the painted Butterfly, tricked out in all the hues of Summer, and fluttering to and fro continually amidst the sunshine, may remind the sons and daughters of pleasure, by the brevity and apparent inutility of its existence, of the vanity and shortness of that life of pleasure to which they devote themselves. But this lovely attendant upon a Summer's day may also teach us a nobler truth. The changes through which this and many other of the insect tribes pass, from the egg to the caterpillar, from the caterpillar to the chry-

salis, and from this to a perfect fly, is one of the most striking things in nature, and is no mean type of man as a mortal and immortal being. This 'Child of the Sun,' as a Poet terms it,

'Was once a worm, a thing that crept
On the bare earth, then wrought a tomb and slept!
And such is man; soon from his cell of clay
To burst a seraph in the blaze of day!'

But amidst the numerous objects which might engage our minds at this season, the hay-field must not be forgotten. The herbage ripened to its maturity, and every where rapidly falling beneath the stroke of the mower, has its appropriate reflections as well as the corn-field. In itself it supplies us with fresh matter of thankfulness to that Providence which thus enables man to provide for the animals converted to his use, against a season when they are unable to provide for themselves; and which thus causes "grass to grow for the cattle, as well as the herb for the service of man." Amidst the bustle and gaiety which prevails at this season, the scriptural improvement of the scene should not be driven from the thoughts. It is salutary for all to view in this scene an image of the uncertainty of life, and the vanity of human glory: for "all flesh is grass, and the goodliness of man but as the flower of the field." As the scythe of the mower sweeps over the field, and levels all the herbage without distinction, so death puts in his sickle continually among the multitude of the human race, sooner or later cutting them all down, and sparing no age, sex, or condition. Surely then the scene which this season presents may read to all the affecting lesson of their mortality, and of the folly of putting off the great work of conversion to God to some future day which

may never arrive. To the true Christian who has learnt to die daily, who walks by faith and not by sight, this lesson does not teach sadness, though it teaches sobriety even in the most joyous moments of his existence. They only find this memento of their latter end to make them unhappy who never number their days, nor apply their hearts to true wisdom. But, alas ! how vain the labour to forget the great concerns of eternity till they find that their summer of life is unprofitably ended, and that they, and all their enjoyments, "must fade away suddenly like the grass, which in the morning is green and groweth up, but in the evening is cut down, dried up, and withered." E. B

ONE THING IS NEEDFUL.

(Continued from page 134.)

THERE is a poor old woman I wish to tell your readers about ; and if instead of hearing about her, they could themselves visit her, I am sure it would not be without profit. I had been for some time, at the Minister's request, accustomed to read to the cottagers, before I became acquainted with Martha —. I had often paused as I passed the little straw-thatched hut, and wished to know something of its inhabitants ; but when I spoke to the Clergyman about it, he never gave a satisfactory answer. At length he told me he had heard something which pleased him very much about the woman who lived there, and promised to introduce me.

We found her sitting by a very poor fire of brush wood, she had just been gathering. She was sewing, but her book lay close by, as if to be taken up every

spare moment. And here I would observe how much Scripture knowledge may be gained while engaged in any sedentary employment. I knew a young person who learnt the whole of the Gospel of John in the space of two months, merely by learning it whilst at work. She assured me it did not at all interfere with her occupation, though she often found it very difficult to fix her attention. This may be a useful hint to rich as well as the poor.

I shall not forget the joy the poor woman's countenance expressed at the sight of her Minister. She indeed appeared to look upon him as an angel of God, for her Saviour's sake. After introducing me he went away, and she actually cried for joy as she mentioned to me the blessing he had been the means of to her soul. She then gave me a short account of the way in which she had been led to the knowledge of the truth.

She had been a regular attendant at the Chapel ever since it was built, but the word had not apparently come with power to her soul till about a year afterwards. Owing to the absence of the Clergyman, a friend of his officiated. He preached from Luke x. 41, 42. The words are in themselves remarkable, and particularly so to Martha ——. They seemed to speak to her very heart. On her return home she told her husband, that if any one ever brought her to Christ, it would be that dear young Minister. His youthful appearance much affected her; he having been so early called to the knowledge of God, while she had been walking in darkness so many years.

After this she was for some weeks in a state of great spiritual anguish, praying indeed, but, as she

said, 'hardly knowing who to pray to.' She was made to feel most deeply her utter departure from God by nature. At length a kind Providence, or, as it will generally be called, accident, once again brought the same Minister to the Chapel. His text was this time, Philipp. iii. 20, "We look for the Saviour," &c. 'Then I knew who I was to look for, and who I was to pray to,' she said. 'And O how I have prayed, and my blessed Lord have heard me. I never can be thankful enough to him. I be a great sinner, but I hope the Lord will receive me for the sake of my blessed Saviour.' Her chief trouble now was her not being able to read. She had learnt her letters when a child, but that was all, there were no Sunday-schools when she was young. She did not like to ask her neighbours, for fear they should laugh at her, so she resolved to teach herself; she used to sit for hours trying to make the words out. She was much grieved at the apparent neglect of the Clergyman, who did not visit her as he did the other poor people. She was unconscious of having done any thing to offend him. She had besides always been regular in her attendance at Chapel both at the weekly lecture as well as on the Lord's day. She did not then know that he had often come to her door, but always finding it fastened he concluded most likely that she was never to be found at home. 'One evening,' she continued, 'as I was going to fetch me a pitcher of water, I see'd him coming up the street, (they call two or three houses the street) O if I could but have a few words with he. When he came up he said to me, 'You don't look well, my good woman.' 'No, Sir, I bant at all well.' 'I will come and see you' he said. 'O I cant tell you how

happy I was at they words. My heart was iſ my mouth. Well Mr. —— did come to see me, and it was the happiest time of my life.'

She said much more, which I cannot now recollect. Her soul seemed filled with gratitude to her Heavenly Father. And many a lesson has she taught me, whilst I was endeavouring to teach her. She improves much in reading, Mr. —— having regularly attended to her ever since that interview. She has that most valuable quality in a scholar, a willing mind, and most anxious desire to improve. The last time I saw her she read, I might say, very well. She appears to go on for the most part rejoicing, though often complaining of her sinful heart, and the little love she has for her blessed Lord.

In two respects the outward change is observable in her. Formerly she was fond of going out to the neighbours houses, now she likes to be alone, she likes it because she can think more of her Saviour, and because she can get no good by going out. Another difference is the appearance of her cottage; instead of being, as the villagers express it, 'always in a muddle,' every thing now looks neat and clean. And I wish I could picture her to your readers—seated by her scanty fire, with her large printed testament on her knees, so deeply engaged in reading it, that you might go in and out of the cottage without being perceived. Or you might stand awhile at the door and hear her singing one of her favorite hymns. And perhaps you would feel inclined to wish with me, on descending the steps leading from the little wicket, 'O that I did but love my blessed Saviour as much as does this poor woman.'

J. H.

SOCINIAN TESTIMONY TO THE USEFULNESS OF AN ESTABLISHMENT.

(*To the Editor of the British Magazine.*)

SIR,—I have much pleasure in extracting the following passage from a sermon preached and published by Mr. Charles Berry, a Socinian, or Humanitarian teacher, at Leicester.

‘It is often said, that, as a sect, we are dwindling away from the public observation, which is not true. We make progress in our own country, *though it is but slow*, because we have to contend against a host of prejudices, and *the enormous influence of a wealthy and corrupt establishment*. But in the East, the cause is advancing; and in the United States, where there are no obstructions to the progress of knowledge and truth, the spread of liberal doctrines has exceeded our most sanguine expectations.’—p. 7.

To the railing of my author I say nothing; for the *illiberal* epithet which he applies to the Church, and his still more *illiberal* insinuations, I forgive him; for the fact he states, I thank him. The *fact* is, that, on the admission of our adversaries, the great impediment to the spread of the Socinian, or Humanitarian heresy, in this country, is the ESTABLISHMENT. In America, where no Establishment exists, this sect, which denies the Saviour who bought us, is found to flourish, though not to the extent our author would imply. If such be the case,—and such, I apprehend, it will be found to be,—I conceive that no honest Dissenter, who sincerely professes what he believes to be evangelical principles, will gainsay the assertion, that an Ecclesiastical Establishment must be an useful institution, and that the peculiar claims of the Church of England to the

gratitude of every one who bows at the name of Jesus, are such as to merit the support of all, except those, who, in seceding from its pale, are actuated by motives purely factious.

I will only add to the statement of the preacher that the progress of Socinianism in England is so *very* slow as to be quite imperceptible. B.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 187.)

3. Rest not in *small* degrees of grace. It is true, weak grace will keep close to Christ: Philadelphia with her little strength "kept Christ's word," (Rev. iii. viii,) yet that pretended grace that always remains in the same posture, may well be suspected as a counterfeit. He that stands at a stay in what he supposeth to be grace, never had grace in truth. It is impossible any thing should be without its essential properties, and it is an essential property of grace to grow, it would not else be the seed of God and an immortal principle; he that has grace, finds such a pleasure and excellency in it, that he can have but little acquiescence in himself without exercise of it. If you do not strengthen your grace, you will make way to strengthen your doubts.

Though weak grace will carry a man to heaven, it will be just as a small and weak vessel surprized by a shattering storm, which though it may get to the shore, yet with excessive hardships and fears; such will sail through a stormy sea, and have a daily contest with stormy doubts ready to overset their hopes; whereas a stout ship well rigged, will play with the waves in

the midst of a tempest, and at last pass through all difficulties without many fears into its haven.

We are not perfect here, perfection is a title peculiar to the blessed; “The spirits of just men *made perfect.*” (Heb. xii. 23.) Yet we must *press forwards towards it*, to attain the resurrection of the dead. (Phil. ii. 11,) *i. e.* such a perfection of holiness which shall be the state of glorified souls. When this is our mark, we shall have a further progress in the degrees of grace, and by that means be nearer to a complete victory. Though a man cannot reach the sun in shooting, yet if he aim at it, he shall mount his arrow higher than if he aimed at a shrub.

Well then, let our aims be at the *highest* degrees. He is so far from gaining strength that does not aspire to a further conquest, that he is in danger to be beaten out of what he hath, and lose the things which he hath wrought. To take up our rest beneath it, is a sign, that neither the hatred of sin our enemy, nor the love of God our friend were ever sincere and well rooted. Not to arrive to a complete victory, is our weakness; not to aspire to it, is our sin; for it answers not the design of Christ’s coming, which was not only that we might have life spiritual and eternal, but an abounding life; “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” (John x. 10.) Not a decreasing life, or one that stands at a stay.

4. *Study* much your exemplar and copy. That hope whereby we expect to become like to Christ in an eternally happy state, must be formed by no lower copy than that of Christ himself: “He that hath this hope,” (John iii. 3,) *i. e.* to see him as he is, “purifies

himself as he is pure." Not as *the saints* are pure, as Abraham, Noah, Job, Daniel. He that steers himself only by the lower exemplars, will be more subject to imperfect draughts and failings, than he that endeavours to form his soul and life according to the original. He that sets the best copy to imitate, will exceed others who propose lower patterns, though he may not yet come near the original. The apostle directs to study Christ much, who is the foundation of our standing : " Consider him that endured such contradictions of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds." (Heb. xii. 3.) Consider him " as the author and finisher of your faith," consider him in his patience on the cross, " despising the shame," and the success of his heroic temper, and this will inspire you with a holy courage under the contradictions of corruptions and temptations against your grace.

This is our duty ; " Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) Christ himself commands it, when he exhorts them to mount above publicans in their duty, and not to conform themselves to the low patterns of the world. Some translate it, *You shall be perfect* : enforcing thereby the strength of the command ; as men, when they would impose any thing by the stress of their authority, say, *you shall* do such a thing, instead of saying, do such a thing. Be so resolute and vigorous in all your duties to God, as he is in all his notes of mercy and goodness to you.

5. Be *conscientious* in the performance of holy duties. A fire which for a while shoots up to heaven, will faint both in its heat and brightness, without fresh supplies of nourishing matter. Bring fresh wood to the altar, morning and evening, as the priests we-

bound for the nourishing of the holy fire. (*Lev. vi. 12.*) God in all his promises supposes the use of means. When he promised Hezekiah his life for fifteen years, it cannot be supposed that he should live without eating and exercise. It is both our sin and misery to neglect the means. Therefore let an holy and an humble spirit breathe in all our acts of worship. If we once become listless to duty, we shall quickly become lifeless in it. If we languish in our duties, we shall not long be lively in our graces. The loss of the stomach is a sign of the loss of health. If we would flourish, we must drink of those waters which spring up to everlasting life. If we desire our leaves should prosper, we should often plant ourselves by the rivers of waters ; we must be where the sun shines, the dews drop, and the Spirit blows. If you find yourselves growing into a slothful temper, check it betimes, and recall to your minds the pleasure you have had in your lively and warm converses with God in any duty, and how delightful afterwards, both the beauty and comfort of your graces were. Liveliness in action is a sign of the continuance of health ; and liveliness in duty, an evidence of the continuance of grace. Let them all be performed in the strength of Christ. It is not means or ordinances brings judgment to victory, but Christ in them.

Attend upon the *word and sacraments*. As the word was the seed whence grace did spring, so it is the channel through which strength and nourishment is conveyed. It is the *seed, whereby we are begotten*, (*1 Pet. i. 23.*) and the milk whereby we are nourished. (*1 Pet. ii. 2.*) If the stomach to our spiritual food grow weak, the vigour of our grace will quickly begin to gasp.

(*To be Continued.*)

RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS.

CHAPTER II.

ROMAN IDOLATRY.

THE Druidical worship had probably existed in our island from the time it was first inhabited, when, about 55 years before Christ, the Romans invaded it, and in the year of our Lord 43, established pretty generally a less bloody system of Idolatry,* but which in its influence was even worse and more pernicious. Rome had admitted into her catalogue of Gods monsters of pride, ambition, and vice. There you might see a monster of impurity made a God, as the case now is in India. There you might see one who had made parents childless, and children parentless exalted to like honour. There you might see him who through pride or ambition had made the streets run down with blood, and who deserved execration rather than adoration, not only substituted in the place of God, but exalted above all that is God. Professing themselves to be wise, saith the Apostle, they became fools; wherefore God gave them up to vile affections.† So vile, indeed, that the foulest and most abominable crimes were even sanctioned by law. So gross was the religion which the Romans introduced into Britain, that none but the most ignorant gave ear to it; the wise men, magistrates, and the very priests themselves, did not believe it, and only upheld it for filthy lucre's sake.‡ Religion with the Romans, as with all idolaters, was merely the observance of certain rites and ceremonies;

* At first the religion of the Romans was only partial; afterwards, by the conquests of Claudius and Agricola, it became more general, but in many remote districts such as Cornwall the Druidical religion was only expelled by Christianity.

† Rom. i. 22—26. ‡ Gibbon's *Rise and Fall*.

the performance of certain appointed sacrifices ; but it taught no rule of life, it enforced no system of morals. This was left to the teaching of the seeming wise, and they were no better than blind guides leading the blind. In general they disbelieved all religion, and taught that happiness consisted either in loosing the reins of the passions, or in feeling indifference, and in being unaffected either by pain or pleasure : two very opposite doctrines it is true, but both betraying ignorance of man—his real happiness and his end.

Such was the religion which our Roman Conquerors substituted for the religion of the Druids ; and you can picture to yourself how wretched and hopeless must have been the condition of our fathers even under the government of far-famed Rome. No comfort had they amid all the troubles to which man is born ; no hope beyond the grave ; nothing to disarm death of his horrors ; nothing to assure them of victory over the grave ; none among them—No, not even one could exclaim, “ thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Let it not then be forgotten, that if we possess mercies and blessings, even the sound of which our ancestors never heard, we have also proportionable obligations and responsibilities devolving upon us. And that if, through the love that the servants of the Lord had for our forefathers souls, they were content to brave difficulties, dangers, and sundry kinds of death, the least we can render back unto the Lord for all his benefits unto us, is to give both our prayers and our substance towards the maintenance and support of missions to those who are now in as great moral and spiritual darkness as even our ancestors were.

TURN THE WALLET.

ALMOST all creatures have some way of expressing their meaning to each other; thus chicken discover in a moment by the hen's call whether she has found food for them, or danger is near. The rabbit sounds an alarm to his fellows by a stamp of the foot; and the dog's whine, or bark, or growl, is by far too significant to be misunderstood either by his canine brethren, or his master. Man, however, being a thinking animal, and having something more than mere wants or fears to express, has alone the gift of *speech*, a noble gift when rightly used, and a large portion of our purest pleasures arises from the exercise of speech in conversation. But here we venture the remark, that *talking* is not necessarily *conversation*. Empty heads and hearts can furnish the former, as hollow vessels best serve to make a noise, but the latter, like good music, requires some knowledge and skill. Yet materials for both *talk* and conversation must be supplied from *some* source; a pump may throw out muddy water, but there must be water in the well in order to work the pump at all. Now it is a stubborn fact that some persons of little observation, and not otherwise well informed by means of books or intercourse with society, are yet great talkers. O the volubility of some of these people is beyond all measure or controul! More words will often be uttered by half a dozen such in the space of an hour, than by as many philosophers. The chief cause of this anomaly is, that they talk not of *things* but of *persons*, and those persons their acquaintance and neighbours: and, unfortunately, their faults or follies, rather than their good qualities, are the most fruitful and favorite points, as though we could remove blots from a paper by laying upon them

a blurred finger.⁸ Not only is such conduct in direct opposition to that lovely spirit of Christianity which “rejoiceth not in iniquity, and hopeth all things,” and forbids foolish talking as not convenient; but *personal* conversation is at all times dangerous ground to venture on; no man is perfect, our most valued friends have some failing, and we cannot walk around any of them without touching some angle. Strange that with the Book of Creation, and the Book of Revelation, lying open before us, and knowing too our own faults, we can find nothing to speak of but the imperfections of others. To those who have hitherto been verily guilty concerning their brother, and who have thoughtlessly and unprofitably spent many an hour in either repeating or listening with delight to a tale of scandal, and who may have been thought vastly clever and amusing from their sharp sayings about their neighbours, the following little incident may serve as a useful hint:—A man walking through the street had a wallet or sack on his shoulder, with a sort of pocket in each end; one part of it hung down behind, and the other before him. Some little boys ran after him, and slyly put feathers and rags into the hind pocket, but the man was not aware of the matter. Now, thought I, if he were to turn the wallet he would see what stuff he was carrying, and how ridiculous his appearance. This then is just what the world does; we carry a wallet; in the pocket before us we put our neighbours faults, which are continually before our eyes, and in the hind pocket we put our own faults, and therefore know not how they are laughed at. Could we turn the wallet we should be silent. When, therefore, you find yourself talking of others, turn the wallet.

AN OBSERVER.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.

Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.
(Psalm cxix. 37.)

A LABOURER's wife, whose desire it was to train up her children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord," having occasion to send a little girl to fetch a pitcher of water from the well on one of those seasons set apart for ungodly deeds and idle vanity, commonly called *Revels*, told her that if she looked at the stalls with a longing eye only, she was in the sight of God as bad as if she went there. When the little girl came back the Mother asked her whether she had looked, 'No, Mother,' she said. '*I turned away my head*, and kept it down, and made haste to get home as fast as I could.' Is there not in this simple fact a volume of important instruction to the Christian traveller whose way lies through a world of vanity?

P. S. E. C.

A THOUGHT ON PERFECTION,

Suggested by a Meditation on 1 John iii. 2.

WHAT is Perfection? A restoration of the Divine image lost by the fall—a being like Him. 1 John iii. 2.

We shall not be like Him till we see Him as He is. We shall not see Him as He is till we enter into glory. Therefore we cannot be perfect till we enter into glory.—Perfection cannot be attained in *this life*. Q. E. D.

A PILGRIM OF HOPE.

VERSE SYSTEM.

1st Week's, portion, Chap. xiv. 4—10. The effect of the Apostle's preaching; the multitude divided in their opinion; unbelieving Jews and Gentiles unite to

persecute the Apostles ; they fly to Lystra and Derbe, and preach there. Miracle performed on the impotent man.

Verse 4. Unbelievers, though their differences may be great as those of these Jews and Gentiles, agree in opposing the preaching of Christ, and decrying his faithful Ministers. From seeing the effect of the preaching of the Gospel to be the same as in the first and purest ages, we may draw confidence even from the troubled state of the waters as being an evidence of their proceeding from the same fountain-head Jesus Christ, who, as he himself declared, “came not to send peace upon earth, but rather division ;” (Luke xii,) a division, be it remembered, not caused by the nature of the Gospel, but from the natural enmity of the carnal heart ever opposed to the truth, as well as to those who by grace have received it.

Verse 6. An illustration of our Saviour’s own command, Matth. x. 23. The Apostle speaks of this, 2 Tim. iii. 11.

Verse 7. ‘In times of persecution Ministers may see cause to quit the spot when they do not quit the work.’

Verse 9. “Perceiving that he had faith to be healed.” The same Lord who (see verse 3 and Hebr. ii. 4) “granted signs and wonders to be done by the Apostle’s hands,” enabled Paul, probably by the gift of “discerning of spirits,” to perceive that he had that faith which we find our blessed Lord always requiring when he performed his miracles, and the want of which we find preventing him doing many miracles in his own country. (Matth. xiii. 58, Mark vi. 5.)

2nd Week, v. 11—17. The people, astonished at the miracle, mistake them for Gods, and intend to do

sacrifice to them as such, from which the Apostles with difficulty restrain them.

Verse 11. "In the speech of Lycaonia." This language of the country in which the people thus cried out, "the gods are come down to us," &c., was evidently not understood by the Apostles, for we find them taking no notice of it till afterwards they heard of their preparing to treat them as gods by offering sacrifice to them.

Note.—Seasons of great encouragement are generally followed by peculiar temptations to Ministers to take the glory to themselves. Let the hearers of a Gospel ministry beware lest they be instruments in such a temptation, by admiring, praising the talents and powers of their Minister, instead of carrying all the glory to Him whose instruments they are. Thus may the Lord be really as much robbed of his glory in a Christian land as by these poor heathens.

Verse 15. "These vanities." The gods of their own making and worshipping—their Jupiter and Mercurius, &c. See Isaiah xliv. 9. Jerem. xiv. 22. "Are there any among the *vanities* of the Gentiles that can give rain?" 1 Cor. viii. 4.

Verse 16. For 4000 years all the nations beside the Jews had been suffered to walk the ways of their own heart; for 4000 years they all walked in idolatry; a sufficient proof what man left to himself will come to. Rom. i. 21 to the end.

3rd Week, v. 18—24. The Jews of Antioch and Iconium persuade the men of Lystra to stone Paul, who being preserved preaches the Gospel with Barnabas at Derbe; they afterwards confirm the disciples at Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, and ordain elders in those cities; thence they pass through Pisidia to Phamphylia.

Verse 17. The witness of the being of One True God might be so far gathered from his works which he saw—"rain from heaven, fruitful seasons," &c.,—as to leave them (Rom. i. 20, 21) "without excuse;" since, instead of seeking to know more of that God whose works shewed him to be a God of holiness, power, and goodness, they preferred setting up idols to worship who suited better their own corrupt ideas and passions. Therefore we find they represented their Gods at one time as beings calculated to inspire nothing but terror and alarm; at another, as dependent upon themselves, as if they needed something; (Acts xvii. 25,) and always as patrons of all those corrupt desires and earthly affections natural to men that love darkness rather than light.

Verse 19. Note—How easily the evil influence of persons opposed to the Gospel lead away those who have only slight impressions made on the affections, instead of saving grace wrought in the heart. The men of Lystra, under the influence of the unbelievers from Antioch and Iconium, now stone Paul, who before could scarce restrain them from doing sacrifice to him.

Verse 21, 22. "Returned again to Lystra," &c. The Apostles, though driven by persecution from the work of preaching the Gospel in these cities, do not hesitate to return to the *same* cities to confirm their converts in the faith.

4th Week, v. 25 to chap. xv. v. 3. After preaching in Perga, Paul and Barnabas pass by way of Attalia to Antioch, where they relate God's work among the Gentiles. The Church being divided respecting circumcision, Paul and Barnabas journey to Jerusalem by way of Phenice and Samaria, to consult the Apostles and Elders on the subject.

Verse 2. We see here how the Apostle provided for the establishment of the churches which they had planted, even by solemnly setting apart Elders, or stated Pastors, to take the spiritual charge over them, adding as before (ch. xiii. 3) the prayers and fasting of the Church for the blessing of the Great Head of the Church upon the Pastors thus Apostolically ordained.

Chap. xv. Verse 2. Again we learn that where the seed of the Gospel has been sown, the enemy will soon follow to scatter tares. The Christian church, in all ages, has been most easily divided by questions upon forms and ceremonies, while the great enemy has thus carried on his own work of hindering the spread of vital Christianity.

POETRY.

TREVETHYE STONE.

MARK ye, stranger! where afar
Frowning o'er the vale Tremar,
Stands the gray Trevethye stone:
Scenes of horror it hath known.
‘Place of graves’* denotes the spot,
Grave of hero long forgot;
But, what'eer his name or race,
Hostile Time hath left no trace;
And as marking earthly pride,
Ploughboys at the hot noon tide
Spread their meal beneath the shade
Where the mighty’s bones are laid.
Crowded once that solitude—
When war rais’d yon Cromlech rude;
When with human sacrifice
Priests in Druid mysteries
Paid the fun’ral obsequies.

* Trevethye signifies ‘A Place of Graves.’



Not the kind domestic tear
 Dropped upon that chieftain's bier,
 But fond wife and fav'rite steed
 Did (a cruel off'ring) bleed.
 Not His name who came to save
 Bless'd that chieftain's heathen grave;
 Wretched captives, doom'd to die,
 Benetugana,* loud cry.
 None to him in death's dark hour
 Spake of Jesu's pard'ning power;
 Reckless of his future state,
 Proudly he bow'd down to fate.
 Stranger!—when Trevethye stone
 Shall the blast of judgment own,—
 When from out their narrow bed
 Start to life the slumb'ring dead,—
 When the universe shall see
 All we have been, and shall be,—
 Stranger, *then*,—we part till then,—
 May we meet as saints. Amen.

T.R.E.

* Benetugana, Old Cornish for Farewell.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

or,

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THE BEEHIVE.

To whatever part of the works of God we turn our attention, there is much to draw forth feelings of wonder and admiration. But perhaps if we could look through nature with a more intelligent eye than we possess, we might discover even greater cause for astonishment among the little than the great things of creation. The mighty Oak, which has braved the storms of centuries; the huge Mountain, with its foaming torrents; the Sun, shedding life and heat upon a dark world; and the Moon, walking in her brightness through the midnight heavens, are instances upon a great and extensive scale of the grandeur of creation's God. But when from these objects we turn to those small animated forms which we term insects, and

which swarm in myriads through every part of the world which we inhabit, we are lost in the consideration of that endless variety of skill which the Creator has bestowed upon creatures which, though they appear, at first sight, insignificant, are in reality highly important in the scale of being. To these has been given not only a form which is "curiously and wonderfully wrought," but a peculiar faculty which naturalists term instinct. God has furnished many of them with a body, beautiful as well as curious. Some are equipped with wings of almost celestial splendor; and multitudes of them are found, when closely examined by the help of magnifying glasses, to be cased in glittering armour, and possessed of weapons or instruments which man has only invented for himself by the exercise of reason during a long course of ages.† The habits displayed

+ 'All their operations,' says an eminent Naturalist, 'are performed with admirable precision and dexterity; and though they do not usually vary the mode, yet that mode is always the best that can be conceived for attaining the end in view. The instruments also with which they are provided are no less wonderful and various, than the operations themselves. They have their saws, and files, and augers, and gimlets, and knives, and lancets, and scissors, and forceps, with many other similar implements, several of which act in more than one capacity, and with a complex and alternate motion to which we have not attained in the use of our tools.' 'Nor is the fact so extraordinary as it may seem at first, since "He who is wise in heart, and wonderful in working," is the inventor and fabricator of the apparatus of insects, which may be considered as a set of miniature patterns drawn for our use by a divine hand.'—*Kirby and Spence's Entomology*. The same author observes, 'In variegation insects certainly exceed every class of beings. Nature, in her sportive mood when painting them, sometimes imitates the clouds of heaven; at others, the meandering course of the rivers of the earth. Many are veined like beautiful marbles, others have the semblance of a robe of the finest network thrown over them. On many, taking her rule and com-

by insects are, in numerous instances, so curious and wonderful, as almost to surpass the efforts of reason; while the structures they erect are often so stupendous in their bulk in proportion to the size of the animal, and built with so much skill as to put to shame the greatest monuments of power and genius. The silken tent in which many caterpillars live and undergo their change, is a more striking object than the palace of a king: and the Beehive is a greater wonder than the Pyramids of Egypt; for in the operations of the insect tribes, we can trace far more clearly and directly the impress of a divine wisdom directing all their movements. We see the Creator's skill upon a small and reduced scale, but it is still the same—infinite in littleness as in greatness. We are still called upon to

passèè, she draws with precision mathematical figures, triangles, squares, circles, &c. On others, she pourtrays with mystic hand what seem like hieroglyphic symbols, or inscribes them with the characters of various languages; and what is more extraordinary, she has registered in others figures which correspond with several dates of the Christian era. Again, to some nature has given fins like those of fish, or a beak like that of birds; to others horns; the bull, the stag, the rhinoceros, and even the unicorn have in this respect many representatives among insects,' &c.

'Insects also,' says this writer, 'may with very little violence be regarded as symbolical of beings out of and above nature. The butterfly, adorned with every beauty and every grace, borne by radiant wings through the fields of ether, and extracting nectar from every flower, gives us some idea of the blessed inhabitants of happier worlds; of angels, and the spirits of the just arrived at their state of perfection. Again, others seem emblematical of a different class of our earthly beings, when we survey their horns, spines, &c., the dens of darkness in which they live, the impurity of their food, their cruelty, the nets they spread, and the pits they sink to entrap the unwary, we can scarcely help regarding them as aptly symbolizing evil demons, the enemies of man, for their crimes and vices driven from the regions of light into darkness and punishment.'

mark, with wondering eyes,

'The unambiguous footsteps of the God
Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.'

As an insect well known to all, and remarkable for its skill, we shall select by way of illustration the Honey Bee. At the present season, the habits of this interesting little creature come under our daily observation. Whenever the sun shines, we may see him winging his way over the fields and gardens, alighting upon every favourite flower, and drinking from each a portion of their nectar. For this purpose the Bee is provided with a most singular apparatus. Its tongue is so constructed as to penetrate into every recess of the flower where the honey lies, and this is received into a bag capable of great inflation, previous to its being swallowed and consigned to the honey stomach. Its thighs are also so formed as to be capable sometimes of carrying home to its hive a load of the pollen, or yellow dust of flowers, which is necessary for the food of the young grubs; and at other times for the collection of a gummy substance called propolis, which is used as a cement for various purposes connected with the hive. To enable it to carry such a burden, nothing can be more curiously formed than the hind legs of the Bee. The middle portion of these is actually formed into a sort of triangular basket by the aid of a margin of strong and thickly set bristles, which thus secure whatever is placed within them from falling out. Wonderful as this may appear, our wonder is increased if we follow the Bee to his retreat. The architectural skill which is there displayed in the construction of the hive, is well known to all who have

investigated the process. The six sided cells, erected to contain the honey, are exactly what a human architect would build if he were required to erect a building that should contain the largest quantity of room in the smallest possible space, and with the smallest quantity of materials. When we farther see how these honey store houses are exactly filled and sealed up for future use, it is impossible not to be struck with the astonishing instinct thus displayed, which leads them to accumulate their treasure with so much care against a period of want and repose. Equally surprising, however, is the harmony which subsists in the Beehive, whose inmates are perhaps seldom fewer than 15,000. The greatest order is preserved amongst them ; for all are industrious ; all know their places, and they have none of that love of change which frequently produces so many calamities among human beings. A distinguished poet well described them when he thus compared them to a well ordered monarchy, —

'Creatures that by a rule in nature teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom ;
They have a king, and officers of sorts,
Where some like magistrates correct at home ;
Others like merchants venture trade abroad ;
Others like soldiers armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds, —
Which pilage they with merry march bring home
To the tent royal of their emperor, —
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold ;
The civil citizens kneading up the honey ;
The poor mechanic-porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate ;
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to ex-executors pale
The lazy yawning drone.'

This poetical description which was written about 200 years ago, has been verified by observers in subsequent times in all its main particulars. It has been ascertained to a certainty from numerous experiments that every hive has a queen Bee, which is the mother of the community, and whom they follow when the hive swarms to seek a new settlement. Without a queen they can neither be made to work, nor indeed to settle any where ; and the affection with which they regard her, is as full of striking particulars as indeed are all the other features of the history of this astonishing insect.

The various instincts which divine Providence has thus implanted in the Bee, will supply us with many useful and religious hints as to our conduct as rational beings and as Christians. The industry of this little animal in collecting honey against a season when no honey could be obtained, may shame the indolence of that man who, however industrious he may be about the trifles of this life, makes no provision for a period when if he has not laid up a store of those good things by which he may be accounted rich towards God, he must assuredly perish. (1 Tim. vi. 19) And on the other hand the diligence with which the Bee examines every flower, when in search of its favorite repast, is a beautiful example of the truly active and zealous Christian who is constantly employed in his Heavenly Master's service, whose meat and drink it is to do his will, and to finish his work. He, like the honey Bee, feasts himself continually upon the riches of God's word, and extracts nourishment therefrom for himself, and the whole family of man. He is not selfish, but divides the gifts of God with others ; communicates freely a

portion of what he gathers ; bears cheerfully his burdens ; is a loyal subject ; a good citizen ; a useful and loving member of the Church to which he belongs. He also, like the tenant of the Beehive, is a wise master-builder, for he builds upon the good foundation which God has laid in Zion ; raises there upon Christ, the wellordered structure of a righteousness framed with all the beauty of spiritual workmanship ; lays upin Him a store of bliss against the evil day ; and thus in the meanwhile is enabled to say with David, “ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple : the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes : the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired than fine gold ; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb.” E. B.

SHORT SERMON.

“ Destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.”—Prov. x. 29.

CAN the heedless sinner, if he read and believe the truth of this assertion, any longer continue careless and uninterested as to his future destiny ? is a question whieh these words immediately suggest to the reflecting mind of a child of God. But, alas ! deeply as the converted man feels the imminent danger to which unconverted sinners are exposed, they are themselves dead—absolutely dead—to every feeling of the kind, and must continue thus dead till they receive the quickening influence of the Spirit of God. The most melancholy feature in the condition of an ungodly man,

is his *ignorance* of the natural corruption of his heart. If, however, he could but be persuaded to bring himself and his actions to a *sincere* comparison with the word of God, this ignorance would not long continue; but, being blinded by the god and prince of this world, and being in love with his own ways, “he will not come unto the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” Here then it is that we behold the immensity of God’s condescension to ruined and ignorant sinners. They “will not come unto him that they might have life,” because they know not their need of it, nor do they possess the power even if they did. And it is whilst they are thus ignorant and helpless, that he, by his word, seeks them out, unveils their deformities, and bends their stubborn wills, so that they are enabled to seek unto him in their distress. May the words before us be made thus profitable to the soul of every sinner that casts his eye upon them; and may he who now writes, and they who read these lines, be led to holy and spiritual meditations, whilst they consider,

1st. What is meant by the word iniquity.

2nd. Who are they that work it, and

3rd. What is to be the end of such characters.

1st. Iniquity is a comprehensive word, including every thing in thought, word, or deed, that is inconsistent with the purity and holiness of God’s will, and also the original corruption of every human being that has been born of the seed of Adam. The two characters contrasted in this verse, are the upright and iniquitous. Uprightness means, a conformity to the law of God, (taken in the spirit as well as the letter) being the true and only standard of holiness; and as iniquity is the want of conformity to this law, just so far as we come

short of this conformity, just so great is the measure of our iniquity. Now that this is evidently the meaning of the word, is apparent from a reference to its use in other parts of Scripture. Thus David, in Psalm xc. 8, writes, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance;" and our Lord Jesus Christ, speaking in Matt. vii. 23 of his reception of ungodly men at the day of Judgment, declares that he will send them from his presence as "workers of iniquity." So also does it reach to the very fountain-head of all crime, and proclaims its connexion with man's natural corruption; for he was "shapen in iniquity; and in sin did his mother conceive him."

Sinner, whosoever you are, of whatever creed or party, whether rich or poor, whether high or low, consider yourself as included in this word. Think not to cloak yourself under the supposition that it is a word which only applies to the most heinous sinner, and not to every sinner individually; this would be to envelop yourself in a cloud which, being quickly dispersed by the breath of truth, would leave you exposed to view as a "worker of iniquity—a seed of evil doers"—as will appear by considering,

2. Who are they that work iniquity?—They are such as are alienated from the service of God through the ignorance that is in them; such as are unrenewed in the spirit of their minds; such as are described in Scripture, as dead in trespasses and sins. It must be so. It would be contrary to the very nature of things if it were otherwise. For man being "very far gone from original righteousness," it would be quite impossible that he could bring forth any fruit, but such

as the original seed is wont to produce. Graft, prune, dig around it, or water it as you please, so long as the root remains you will only labour in vain, it will baffle all your exertions. Man's unrenewed mind is in fact the mint in which this base coin is stamped; and the members of his body the instruments by which it is passed upon the world. But bring this coin to the touchstone of God's word, and it will soon prove it to be altogether base in its origin. To render a work pleasing to God it must "necessarily spring out of a true and lively faith," for "without faith it is impossible to please him;" and therefore every faithless soul must be in truth a worker of iniquity. All men in their unrenewed state are without faith, and consequently every action of their lives is a direct violation of God's law. These, then, are the persons by whom iniquity is committed; they add sin to sin, and yet cannot be persuaded that this is their true condition. Surely if unconverted men could be induced to look back upon their past lives, and to consider that none of their actions can spring from faith, it would not be very difficult to convince them that they are the very characters spoken of in the text. How great then the multitude of those that work iniquity! Reader, are you one of that unhappy multitude? It will not be difficult for you to decide. Only ask yourself the simple question, Do I live by faith & a faith working by love, and you soon solve the difficulty. If you do you are a child of God, a joint-heir with Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. If you do not, how awful your condition, how deplorable the prospect that lies before you. Let us see then,

3. What is to be the end of those that work iniquity?

It is, in one word, to be destruction--final--irremediable destruction--separation from the immediate presence of God--and endless misery in the place reserved for the devil and his angels. It is not to be annihilation, but an ever-dying, yet never-ending state of torment. Think you, sinner, that this is the mere fancy of a melancholy brain? No! it is proclaimed by him who "spake as never man spake," to be even more than this; a place where there shall be, "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth;" "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." "Depart ye cursed into everlasting burnings," will be the final end of every worker of iniquity. Need I dwell upon this subject. Need I proceed and describe to you the consternation (which the word also means) of such as find themselves unexpectedly lifting up their eyes in this place of torment; of such as would not be persuaded to take heed unto their ways, but "drew iniquity as with a cart rope;" of such as flattered themselves that all was peace, when sudden destruction came upon them. Be persuaded then, dear reader, (for I speak with a sincere love for the souls of sinners) be persuaded by the terrors of the Lord to dread the end of your iniquities. It is indeed as grievous as it is certain. Escape for your lives, for their is yet opportunity. Despise not the warnings and threatenings, the invitations and mercies of a long-suffering God, but repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and "iniquity shall not be your ruin."

Rd. M.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 158.)

Be much in prayer. This is the chief duty, and that which makes all others more vigorous in their tendency to their end. Our Saviour breathes out strong cries, though he had the strongest assurances of a victorious success. (Heb. v. 7.) Promises of perseverance should be the guides of our prayers. We may pray most comfortably for that which we are sure to speed in. The spirit which is sent to comfort us in our fears of miscarrying, is a "spirit of supplication" as well as a spirit of grace. (Zech. xii. 10.) Where it is most a spirit of grace, it will be also most a spirit of supplication. To talk of a gracious man that neglects prayer is as great nonsense as to tell us of a living man that does not breathe. We in all our distresses make our application to those that have power in their hands. It is God only draws us to Christ, and keeps us with him. It is Christ that is ordered to bring forth judgment unto victory. To him therefore we must be petitioners. He gives us first the grace of desire, that he may with the more honour confer the mercy he intends us. Our Saviour sets us a pattern, in praying to the Father to preserve and keep us. (John 17.) We must not therefore be negligent in our desires of it, or distrustful of the success; especially when we have encouragements by Christ's petition for the same thing, who was never denied by his Father any request for his people. You have many arguments to use; "Strengthen, O Lord, that thou hast wrought for us," (Psal. lxviii. 28.) i. e. let thy power preserve what thy power did work. It is as much to the glory of thy omnipotent love to second thy own

work with thy own strength, as it was to begin it. To what purpose, O God, wert thou pleased to work it, if thou wilt not maintain it? The arguments of God's glory are most prevalent. They were so in the mouth of Moses; plead the same believably, and thou wilt find the same success. It is for the glory of God you should be victorious. "He which establishes us with you, is God." (2 Cor. i. 21.) Shall we think to stand without seeking to the author of our standing? And that you may pray boldly, believe it to be a thing belonging to you, by virtue of Christ's purchase, as well as your reconciliation and adoption. If you can but pray, you are sure to succeed in the conquest. And you can never want pleas for standing, till God cancel the bond of his everlasting covenant, and depose Christ from his office of an Advocate. Plead these then. God cannot deny his own bond, nor resist the exercise of an office of his own erecting.

6. Exercise *grace much*. Graces, as soldiers, well exercised, are more fit to engage an invading enemy. Master them up often, and see thy strength; but behold it with humility, prayer, and thankfulness. Living bodies grow stronger by moderate exercise; and many things grow rusty and unfit, for want of use. Graces are compared to armour, (Eph. 6,) and armour is the better for use. Frequent blowing up this fire will make it stronger in itself, and more comfortable to us.

(1.) *Faith*. It was by faith that "out of weakness" the ancient worthies "were made stronger." (Hebr. xi. 24.) It was this made Abraham the father of the faithful, and it will make all the children mighty men of valour. (Rom. iv. 24.) It is a mighty expression, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in

those that hope in his mercy." (*Psalm cxlvii. 11.*) As if the delight and content of his being were maintained by this grace. He takes pleasure to relieve, and pleasure to support them. Mercy cannot be so hard-hearted, as to deny assistance to that faith that clings about it: should God do so, he would cast off his pleasure. You can never offend him by cleaving to him with full purpose of love. The faster you hold him, the less power will indwelling sin, or watchful Satan, have to drag you from him; for the more you hold him, the more he holds you; you do not only apprehend him, but are apprehended by him. A sling and stone, with faith in the name of the Lord, will be more successful to pierce the head of Goliath with his whole army of Philistines, than if you did march clothed with Saul's armour; faith will do more than all the arms and ammunition of moral philosophy, so much furbished and trimmed up in our day.

It is to faith all the *victorious* acts of a Christian, through the whole Scripture, are ascribed. Faith quenches the fiery darts of the devil; faith purifies the heart from inward corruptions; faith wrestles with principalities and powers; faith gets the victory over the world; faith preserves us by engaging God's power for us; and faith in all this contest never leaves us, till it lands us in heaven. It is the prime piece in the Christian armour whereby we gain the victory, and therefore there is such an emphasis set upon it, as if, though a man had all the rest, and wanted this, he would be foundered in all his attempts; "Above all, taking the shield of faith," (*Ephes. vi. 16,*) as if all other pieces, though very gallant and strong, were nothing to this, to keep off the darts of the enemy.

It is a grace *worthy* the exercise. Other graces may fail, and the soul recover ; but if faith fail all is gone. The acting of all our graces depends upon the strength and acting of our faith. The stronger our faith, the greater our stability ; the weaker our faith, the more tottering our standing. If the soul could at first go out to God in acts of faith, when its corruptions had the first blow given them, and found success, much more encouragement hath it to launch out to Christ, and renew the same faith, since the wounds upon its lusts are both more numerous and deeper.

(2.) *Patience.* I mean not patience under afflictions, but a patient waiting ; there is need of patience to uphold us in a course of obedience, and need of it also to strengthen our expectations of reward. "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." (Hebr. x. 36.) God in the course of his providence seems sometimes to turn the back of his promise upon us ; there is need of a patient waiting, till it turn again and march towards us. He sometimes lets loose the devil upon us, and then we fear the waters will swallow up our souls, and that our spiritual enemies will utterly defeat us ; there is need of patience, till God pulls back the chain whereby he holds our enemy. Christ accomplishes the most glorious things by degrees. As he does not give all grace in a moment, so he does not perfect it in a moment. Patience must endure in the whole military exercise. We cannot lay it aside, till we gain the victory. It is as necessary as faith, to entitle us to the inheritance of the promises of perseverance and victory ; "Through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Hebr. vi. 12.) Without it we cannot believe in hope against hope ; without it we can never run our race.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.**CHAPTER III.****INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.**

THE time when, and the persons by whom, Christianity was introduced into Britain are circumstances involved in profound mystery. Perhaps the wisdom of God saw fit to conceal these things, lest a superstitious and sinful veneration for our benefactors might have arisen among us, similar to that now existing in Popish countries for Saints and Relics. It is however pretty certain that towards the close of the first century the light of the glorious Gospel shone upon us, and that the prediction of the Prophet* was literally fulfilled in our island. The same infinite wisdom which appointed the Romans to be the rulers of the Jews, at the time of the publication of the Gospel, appointed them also to be the rulers of other distant and powerful nations, and among the rest, of our island; so that although Rome had been the fruitful source from whence all manner of abominations had flowed, many of her subjects, both in Judea and elsewhere, being leavened by the Gospel, she became also (despite the malice and opposition of her heathen Emperors) the fruitful mother of much good. Many of her soldiers, although they renounced not their allegiance to their earthly king, bowed to the sceptre of the Prince of Peace, and became good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ. Hence it came to pass, that the religion of Jesus Christ flew among the nations on the wings of the Roman eagles, and it is not improbable that by this means Christianity was first introduced among

* *Isaiah lxvi. 19.*

us.* It is of little consequence to us, (could we even accurately determine,) who were our benefactors ; since we must be assured it could have been none other than the undeserved and unsolicited grace and mercy of God in the first instance, which could have sent glad tidings of pardon and peace to such a degraded and corrupted generation as our heathen forefathers.

The records of these early times, being for the most part either lost or destroyed, we cannot with any degree of accuracy state the conquests which Christianity made in our island on its first introduction ; but believing, as we do, that the publication of the Gospel, accompanied by God's Spirit, is the power of God unto salvation, we must also conclude that "as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed."

Our blessed Lord when speaking of his people, in contradistinction to the world, has designated them, "a little flock ;" and from the fact that no persecution of the Christians, which we know of, had reached Britain until that, by the Emperor Aurelian, in the year 280,† we conclude that the number of converts to Christianity before this period was too small and insignificant to attract the notice of either the Roman Emperors, their Generals, or their Consuls.

The account given by Fox of the death of the first British Martyr, being both interesting and instructive, we give it nearly in his own words. Alban was origi-

* Some have imagined that the Apostles themselves, or some of their converts, who were scattered abroad in the persecution that arose on the death of Stephen, were the first preachers in Britain. Others even go so far as to suppose on the testimony of Eusebius, a Historian of the fourth century, that St. Paul himself preached the Gospel in this country ; but after due examination of various testimonies, I can see no positive or conclusive evidence of the fact.

† Fox's Book of Martyrs, p. 69.

nally a Pagan, but being of a very humane disposition, he sheltered a Christian teacher, named Amphibalus, whom some officers were in pursuit of on account of his religion. The pious example, and edifying discourses of the Refugee, made a great impression on the mind of Alban. He longed to become a member of a religion which charmed him ; the fugitive teacher took pains to instruct him ; and before his discovery, Alban became a convert to the Christian faith.

Alban now took a firm resolution to preserve the sentiment of a Christian, or to die the death of a Martyr. The enemies of Amphibalus, having intelligence of the place where he was secreted, came to the house of Alban in order to apprehend him. The noble host, desirous of protecting his benefactor, changed clothes with him in order to facilitate his escape, and when the soldiers came, delivered himself up as the object of their pursuit. Being carried before the General the deceit was immediately discovered, and Amphibalus having escaped, the officer determined to wreak his vengeance on Alban. Alban was then commanded to advance to the altar, and sacrifice to the Pagan Deities, but he refused, boldly declaring himself to be a Christian. Subsequently, he was scourged and beheaded. Bede[†] moreover states, that upon this occasion the executioner suddenly became a convert to Christianity, and entreated permission either to die for Alban or with him. Obtaining the latter request, he was beheaded by a soldier. This took place, he adds, on the 22d of June, A. D. 287, at Verulam, now St. Albans, in Hertfordshire.

The foregoing narrative seems to point out the striking manner in which the religion of the first

[†] Bede's Ecclesiastical History.

Christians evidenced itself ; for the religion of Amphibalus was so convincing both in his life and conversation, that it became the means, under God, of Alban's conversion. And would you, my dear reader, desire that the kingdom of Christ should even now come, in reference to those that are around you, seek to live more fully, and demonstrate more clearly, the religion you profess ; and should you meet in return for this, the taunts and derision of men (for you are not likely to be exposed to Alban's death), be persuaded that the approbation of your God will be more than a compensation for the frowns of the world that lieth in the wicked one.

Although we have not been able to give many interesting particulars respecting the spread of the Gospel in our island in these early ages, yet we can speak more confidently of the purity in which the professors held the doctrines of the Gospel. The Church of Christ had experienced on the day of Pentecost a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit ; it had cherished this Spirit, and it now flourished exceedingly under his beneficent rays. Doubtless the Church in Britain partook of the spirit of those men who had hazarded their lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus, and sealed with their blood their testimony for the truth. Although they might have been Romans who founded the Church in Britain, one thing is certain—the spirit of their religion was as different from the religion of the Roman Catholics in the present day as light is from darkness, or error from truth ; for the Roman Catholic Religion, as it is now exhibited in Britain, did not even appear at Rome, until some hundred of years after : and long before that time, we have seen that Christian Church, similar to what is called †

formed Church, or Protestant Church, existed in our island. If then Protestants are tauntingly asked by the Church of Rome, where the Protestant Church was before the Reformation, we may certainly reply that a portion of it existed in England, before the corruptions of Rome were either heard of or invented.

VERSE SYSTEM.

1st Portion, Chap. xv. 4—12. (July 27 to August 4th.) Dispute raised by the Pharisees about circumcision; council of the Apostles and Elders called to settle the question; Peter's address on the subject.

Verse 5. (July 28.) The old question of dispute stirred up again; the question which it is the object of the whole Epistle to the Galatians to settle; the question, in fact, which divides Papists and Protestants, Pharisees and true believers in all ages; the last prejudice which as believers we get rid of.

Verse 6. We see by this the importance of the Ministers of the Church meeting to consider such matters. Clerical Meetings, could they be more widely extended, would be (as we can speak by experience) very useful to this end.

Verse 7. "Ye know how that a good while ago," &c. 'Ye know I was questioned about it, and cleared myself to universal satisfaction, and every body rejoiced that God had "granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life," and nobody said a word about circumcising them.' See Chap. xiv. 18.

Verse 8. See remarks on Chap. xi. verse 16, p. 72.

Verse 9. (August 1.) By faith their hearts being purified both from the guilt of sin lying upon the conscience through the blood of Christ, (Hebr. ix. 13,

14,) as well as from the power of sin through the Spirit of Christ ; they had no need of those outward washings and legal purifications, which were only "imposed until the time of reformation," that is, only intended to shew the necessity of that *Heart* purification which the believing Gentiles now possessed.

Verse 10. "Why tempt ye God." We tempt or try the goodness of God, when we call in question the truth of his word ; but it was a truth which God himself had clearly settled in the case of Cornelius and the other believing Gentiles, that they need not be circumcised, &c. The Pharisees, by persisting that they ought to be circumcised, cast a reproach upon God, as if they were not satisfied with his decision, or required more proof than God had been pleased to give ;* or as if he who is not "a man that he should lie, or son of man that he should repent," would alter the thing that had gone out of his lips on this point. "A yoke upon the neck," &c. Not only, or principally, the law of Moses in that part of which it related to its many washings and ceremonies, which were indeed hard to be borne, especially by those who were called to the *liberty* of the Gospel ; but the moral law of the ten commandments which (Gal. v. 3,) they that would be circumcised made themselves debtors to obey--a yoke perfectly insupportable to every one born of woman, except to Him who, for our sakes, added to the perfection of Godhead, the perfection of manhood.

Verse 11. 'The Gentiles were not saved by the light of nature, nor the Jews by the law of Moses;

* This was the sin of their forefathers, who not contented with the mighty works which Christ did, as the evidence of his divinity, required from him a sign from heaven.

the one was not lost for want of circumcision, nor the other saved by it; the only way of salvation to both, and under all dispensations, is the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Verse 12. "Declaring what miracles and wonders ;" these being done amongst and upon the *Gentiles*, formed another proof that God put no difference between the two parties.

2nd Portion, Verse 13—21. (August 5—18.) The speech of the Apostle James, confirming that of the Apostle Peter, and adding his sentence as to the course they should take.

Verse 13. (August 5.) James, the son of Alpheus, called, "The Lord's brother," (Galat. i. 19,) probably the chief Paster, or Bishop* of the Church at Jerusalem.

Verse 14 Simeon (Simon Peter) in the case of Cornelius. Note. This is still the comfort of the Minister of the Gospel; still our strong ground for Missionary exertions, that wherever his Gospel is sent, though many despise, and many more go no further than to be glad of the message, for a while believing and in time of temptation falling away; that it shall *certainly* answer the purposes of that visit, it shall take out a *people* that shall be to the praise and glory of His Name in time and eternity.

Verse 15. As Peter had proved God's intention of calling the Gentiles by facts, by the case of Cornelius, &c; as Paul and Barnabas had further established the

* Doddridge, in his zeal against Episcopacy, is very anxious to prove that James did not give this sentence with any authority above the rest, like that of a Bishop in his diocese: but from the form he uses in the 19th verse, "My sentence is," or 'I judge,' 'I determine,' he seems to give the idea of the authority which we suppose him to have had. Eusebius, the Church Historian, calls him the Bishop of the Apostles.

same point by stating the signs and miracles which God had wrought by their hands upon *Gentiles*; James sums up the whole argument by appealing to the authority of Scripture as agreeing to the same.

Verse 16. "The tabernacle," or house, and kingdom of David, was indeed fallen; every thing relating to temporal or spiritual matters in the Jewish Church and nation, was at a very low ebb when the Prophet wrote. Jesus, who according to the flesh, was descended from David, and was the rightful heir of David's throne, was born of a poor virgin, and he himself the King of the Jews, crucified among them, yet this fallen tabernacle shall be restored, not indeed in a carnal way, but a spiritual one, even in the Lord Jesus Christ as exalted to reign over his Church.

Verse 17. "The residue of men;" not the Jews only, who wished to monopolize to themselves all interest in the tabernacle of David, but the rest of the world, who for 4000 years had seemed left out; now they were to have part in this spiritual family of David—the blessing of Christ's kingdom. This passage of Scripture then is just to the point; for if it was the purpose of God to build up the tabernacle of David—to establish the kingdom of Christ; and if that kingdom was to consist of the "residue of men," uncircumcised Gentiles as well as circumcised Jews, to attempt to shut out these, as these objectors did, was evidently fighting against the appointment of God.

TO THE CLEMATIS, OR TRAVELLER'S JOY.

HAIL lovely flower, that scent'st the wind
At summer's evening hour,
As if by fairy-finger twined
Around the latic'd bower;

Thy little gem of spotless white,
 So pure without alloy,
 That sheds around the Alpine height
 Its balmy fragrance, shew's 'twas right
 To call thee Traveller's Joy.

Sweet emblem of a fairer gem,
 A plant of heavenly birth,
 That sprung from Jesse's favoured stem,
 The joy of all the earth;
 Whose branches heedless of the foe
 That threatens to destroy,
 Still more and more luxuriant grow,
 And form, along this vale of woe,
 The Christian Traveller's Joy.

Yes, 'tis the joy of all who roam,
 Guided by Jesu's grace,
 In search of their eternal home,
 Their heavenly resting-place:
 Who, journeying o'er this barren plain
 Where sin and hell annoy,
 With rapture hail a balm for pain,
 A refuge from the storm and rain,
 In Christ, the Traveller's Joy.

'Tis sweet, in summer's evening hour,
 To sit while Zephyr brings,
 From yonder rustic latic'd bower,
 Thy perfume on his wings:
 But oh! tis sweeter far to prove,
 When fears our peace destroy,
 That fragrant perfume from above,
 Borne on the healing wings of love,
 From Christ, the Traveller's Joy.

Sweet flower thy charms must soon decay,
 Although so bright and fair,
 For time will pluck thy gem away,
 And strip thy branches bare:
 But this in Eden's bowers shall bloom,
 And millions tongues employ,
 Who in their heavenly, happy home
 Shall praise for endless years to come
 Jesus, the Traveller's Joy.

J. M.

REV. H. A. SIMCOE, (Penhallo-Press) Cornwall.

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THE SEA.

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches; *So is this great and wide sea also.*" (Psalm civ. 24, 25). From these words we may infer that the attention of the divine Psalmist was deeply arrested by a sight of the ocean; and who that beholds this object with any degree of consideration, but must be struck with its importance, if not with its beauty.

The Sea is evidently the chief source of all human riches. Without the Sea, the earth must have been a barren wilderness. From the Sea the clouds are constantly supplied with those watery treasures without which the earth could not have yielded its increase. Had there been no showers, there would have been no corn: and the fruits of the earth, which are now gathering in, (at whatever distance from the ocean,) would soon have withered but for the moisture communicated to the atmosphere from this inexhaustible fountain. Hence therefore the Sea may justly be viewed as a vast and boundless reservoir of life and blessing to the whole globe. What the heart is to the human body, the ocean is to the land—the mainspring, or pulse of the whole system: and as the former sends forth continually its crimson currents to nourish the human frame, and receives it back again after it has run its destined rounds; so also, with regard to the latter, when the fluid evaporated from it has fulfilled its purpose of watering the earth, the rivers return a portion of the precious treasure back again, to be again sent forth by the agency of the clouds to the most distant extremities of that mighty mass around which the Sea rolls its waters.

The ocean is a favorite topic of reference with the sacred writers; and what mind that is imbued with any thing like a Scriptural feeling can behold this glorious object without having his thoughts carried upwards to that great Creator who “measured these waters in the hollow of his hand,” according to the sublime language of Isaiah. Yes! The Almighty Spirit it was which first brooded over the chaotic abyss when it was yet without form and void! His Sovereign word

assuredly it was which pronounced the decree, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear!" Surely we cannot sufficiently admire this simple but magnificent display of power by which, on the third day of creation, the waters retired to the places appointed to receive them, and heard the *far* which omnipotence uttered, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Well-might the Almighty himself demand attention to this fact, and ask, "Who shut up the sea with doors when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, And brake up for it my decreed place?" (*Job xxxviii. 8--10.*) Nothing less than a feeling of amazement must seize upon us if, as we stand by the sea-side, and cast our eyes over the expanse of waters, we try to understand by what law it is that they are restrained from again rushing over the shores. In some places, as on the coast of Cornwall, we see a bold, rocky, and lofty boundary; but in others, the very reverse of this—a sandy and almost flat shore, with nothing apparently to stop the progress of the waves from overwhelming the land. And when we further reflect upon the numerous proofs which the land every where presents of having been once covered by the sea, which has left behind it innumerable vestiges of its effects upon the solid rocks, and upon the fossil remains of animals which these contain, we may well confess our ignorance of the means employed by God to prevent the same catastrophe as that of a universal deluge from occurring again. Indeed the fact is so striking that the divine

Being himself employs it to chide the folly and to alarm the confidence of his ancient people : " Fear ye not me ? saith the Lord : I will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail ; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it ?" (Jer. v. 22.) Were a man to see the approach of the tide for the first time he might well be alarmed. But those who have often witnessed this sight, and who know that the ebbing and flowing of the waters is regulated by the course of the moon, do not perhaps sufficiently reflect upon the wonderful train of natural causes which must have been put into operation by the hand of Providence to produce this effect. The return of the tide twice every day is not the less surprising, because science teaches us to believe that this is owing to the attractive influence which the body of the moon exerts upon the earth, and especially upon its great moveable fluid the ocean. For what a mysterious page of nature does this fact open when we thus behold ourselves linked as it were by an invisible chain to a distant world ! How forcibly should this remind us of our mysterious connexion with the invisible world of spirits, which is continually drawing us towards it, and holding us fast by a firm and everlasting bond. Our close connexion with the moon may also remind us of the relation which subsists between all true believers, and that mystical body the Church of Christ to which they belong. The moon is the scriptural emblem* of that Church which holds all the faithful together by the holiest and most powerful

* Sol. Song vi. 10. Rev. xii. 1.

ties. It is only by communion with this Church that the tides of piety are kept continually flowing; and the blessings of religion are brought home to every door. True religion also, be it remembered, bears this further resemblance to the Sea, that though it is always flowing, and always full, it yet has its periodical tides. Twice every day at least it pays its tribute of prayer and praise at the footstool of its Creator and Redeemer; and on the Lord's-day, and at Sacramental seasons especially, it enters his Courts with the spring-tide offering of devotion; there paying its vows to the Most High, and offering the sacrifice of righteousness in all the beauty of holiness, with the same fulness of delight, with the same extraordinary flow of holy emotion that the Sea approaches the shores, and flows up to its highest point, when the moon and the sun exert their united influence upon its tides.

The Sea, in whatever light we view it, whether we watch the grandeur of its movements; analyze its contents, or survey its magnitude, will yield much matter for pleasing and serious contemplation. How astonishing is it that this stupendous mass should be thus ever kept in motion, and so strongly impregnated with salt; and yet yield us food as devoid of saltiness as any other animal production! Wisely, however, have these things been arranged, though we can understand but little of the intricate process necessary to produce the result. Thus much we know, that without these qualities the ocean instead of being a source of almost every blessing, would speedily putrefy and become one wide reservoir of pestilence and death to all the globe. And in spiritual things is there not a similar analogy subsisting? For what would be the moral world without

the salt of Christianity (Matt. xv. 13); without the motions of the blessed Spirit of all grace continually quickening, refreshing, stirring, agitating the whole naturally corrupt mass? But for these things all its other advantages would have been in vain. The blessings of the Gospel alone supplies those mysterious but salutary principles, by which the great process of spiritual renovation is continually going on; and a world that lieth in wickedness is yet preserved till that day when, having answered all the divine purposes concerning it, the mighty Angel of Judgment, planting one foot on the Sea, and the other on the land, shall swear by him that liveth for ever that time shall be no longer, (Rev. x. 6.)

(To be concluded in our next.)

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS."

It has been remarked by some one that Christians too commonly look at their own shadows, rather than at the Sun that is shining so splendidly upon them. The truth of this remark is too evident to those who are but partially acquainted with the character and experience of believers generally. They seem to think that peace, confidence, and joy must arise from the consciousness of their own purity and rectitude; that perfection of Christian character can be maintained without the presence of the source of all Christian and holy influence,—the Lord Jesus Christ. They expect light without seeing the sun, and hope for nourishment without partaking of the necessary food. They quite forget that the Christian's life is a "life of faith"—of faith on some object extrinsic from them—and

that no longer than that object is present to their minds, can they be said to "live by faith."

Man walks either by sense or by faith. He walks by sense so long as he is actuated by merely human motives, or governed by wordly maxims, having recourse to no higher authority, or being stimulated by no other incentive than the dictates of reason, and the invitation of carnal gratifications. The word and will of God are not supreme with him, but are held in such subordination to inferior motives, as to constitute no influential part of his mental character. He is, for default of this supremacy of the word and will of God in his heart, "without God and without Christ." "God hath not shined into his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

The man that walks by faith is ever contemplating another object that has been revealed to him, to the testimony of which he gives implicit credit. That object is Jesus, the Saviour of sinners; and on what the Scriptures testify concerning him, he places perfect reliance. An habitual regard to him constitutes the life of faith; and faith is not in the heart when Christ is not there. Now this life of faith characterizes the believer through every stage of his Christian course; as he begins, so he continues and ends—"he looks unto Jesus." There is no new principle for his conduct at every stage of his progress; or one rule for the young Christian, and another for the more advanced or aged Christian. "Having begun in the Spirit, they are not to be perfected by the flesh." No, "the just (from first to last) shall live by faith." When a Christian is first made to feel the plague of

his heart, and the burden of his iniquities, he finds no peace to his burdened soul, and no relief to his wounded spirit, but by "looking unto Jesus as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." He sees in his sufferings an ample atonement for sin, and in his perfect obedience a sufficient ground for justification. He receives therefore the reconciliation; he believes, he adores, he loves. But this is not one solitary act of the believer, once done and never more performed. Though the guilt of sin is believed to be forever removed, and there is perfect and eternal redemption through the blood of the Cross, yet sin still lives in the heart. The tree may for a time seem to be cut down, yet its roots remain, which, being surrounded with congenial aliment, suddenly and vigorously shoots forth afresh. And now is the trial of the believer's faith,—the consistency of his creed, and the strength of his grace. The odious, fearful, and abominable thing has again appeared, and driven peace and holiness from their seat, or rather mingled itself with them, (Satan among the sons of God) tainting the atmosphere around. What is now to be done? Where shall the soul, conscious of its pollution, find another fountain for uncleanness? and many are the attempts of the untried to obtain other refuges than that before possessed. Ah! there is no balm but in Gilead! No other refuge but the Cross! No other peace-maker but the crucified Nazarene! He again then "looks unto Jesus;" fresh oil is immediately poured on the troubled conscience; peace is again restored, and joy again abounds. And this is the oft-repeated, yea, the daily, the continued exercise of the Christian's heart. The law of sin reigns in his members, but the law of

the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus quenches the terrors of sin, and disarms it of its power. The sight of Christ crucified gives the assurance of pardon, and this assurance obtains the victory, "for this is the victory, even our faith." The conviction of the death of the guilt of sin by the sacrifice of the Cross, dispels the fascinating influence of sin; for the knowledge of our death with Christ, the Apostle argues (Rom. vi.) will cause us to live with him. If we are indeed dead and ascended with him, our affections will be crucified to the world, and will be set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. As then the Christian cannot but sin while here below, (for what man is there that sinneth not? "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" "Oh wretched man that I am") he must feel the necessity of still "Looking unto Jesus." He went there at first, and there he must go last,—"Yesterday, to-day, and for ever." There is the proper place to go; there he is commanded to go; and in going there he glorifies Christ, and honours the Father. That a Christian through infirmity sins, is the law of his nature; that a Christian hates and detests his sins, is necessary from the holy seed within him: and that he carries his sin fearlessly and boldly to the sin-bearer, is the glory of faith—for the glory of Christ—and to the glory of Him who hath appointed the all-sufficient and infallible remedy. If this be not according to truth, what then are we to do with the daily, the hourly, the momentary sins of our heart? How can peace be for a moment enjoyed! How can hope ever enter the breast! How can joy ever animate the soul! Impossible! Oh, then, fellow sinners, and fellow saints, let us "look unto

Jesus!" Look to Him through our sins ; burst through these our enemies that would obstruct our way to Him ; lay your sins at His feet ; receive His forgiving love ; drink of his peace and joy ; and go on your way rejoicing—rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh. “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect ? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died.”

CHRISTIANUS.

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DEATH OF AN UNBELIEVER.



As the interest which one feels in a narrative is proportioned to the reality and truth of that narrative, I warn thee, my reader, that the present is not one of my own imagination, but a tale of real life, which fell under my own notice. The subject of it was a person who moved in the middle class of society—a Farmer. He was brought up in great ignorance; for although he could read and write, he was ignorant of the only

time God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent : ignorant of sin and its deserts ; ignorant of the only way of salvation ; and this was to be traced to his never having learned these truths from God's word, the Bible. Wherever there is ignorance of God's word, it is always accompanied by a life of folly, and practical atheism ; for atheism includes in its meaning a living without God in the world. Such was the life of him whose case I would urge you now seriously to consider, in order that you may draw from it this lesson—that as men live, so generally do they die ; that death beds, of all other places, are the most unlikely for a man to be recovered from the sins of a mis-spent life.

As every man, however depraved, forms to himself some particular creed in which he trusts, some refuge of lies in which he thinks himself secure, so had the subject of the present memoir. Are you anxious to know what it was ? I must tell you it was a creed very generally received, a creed in which the far greater part of mankind trust. He considered the business of his farm the one thing needful, and worshipped a golden God,—the god of gain. With this his whole thoughts were engrossed, his whole man engaged ; this glued him down to the earth, and transformed him into a very brute ; yea, this lowered him beneath the brute. (Isai. i. 3.) He possessed a soul in common with you, but it became the slave of his body, and the subject of that perishing lordling. The Sabbath-day, which was a day of rest to others, was no day of rest to him ; then he settled up his accounts, and transacted other business ; then he journeyed, visited, and received his company. The house of God was neglected, and that knee which would so

easily bend to mammon, was unaccustomed to bend to Him in whom he lived, and moved, and had his being. The Sabbath being thus spent, what was to be hoped for during the rest of the week? It was one continued round of planning and scheming, how he might add house to house, and field to field, for he was a covetous man: and, as I hold it a maxim, that a covetous man cannot possibly be honest, but only so far as to serve his own turn, his reputation, his credit, or his gain, I doubt not but much of the fruits of this unhappy man's ignorance and unbelief lies concealed: a veil is cast over many a dark and unhallowed act now, which will be revealed hereafter, when all the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light; when over-reaching—the false balance—the deceitful measure, will be exposed to men and angels, and when the cry of the labourer (who had reaped down fields) for withholden hire, will enter the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth, and cry aloud for vengeance.

It may be that you are a Farmer, and that you also are swallowed up by the master sins of avarice and covetousness, to the neglect of God and religion; that you sacrifice to your molten calf not only the hours and the days of your week, but the more sacred hours of the Sabbath, which God hath sanctified to himself. Has it ever struck you that the moth, the rust, and the cankerworm are already gnawing at the heart of your gods? That a day is coming when none of these things will profit you? When you would give a whole world (if you possessed it) in exchange for the pearl of great price, which you are now neglecting to the ruin of your immortal souls.

But when I have said thus much of him whose end

I was called to witness, I would not be understood to say that he never had any thoughts of God and his soul; on the contrary, God would sometimes knock so loudly at the heart of the trembling deceiver, that he would cause himself to be heard amid all the tumult and hurry of business. But how far was God heard? Only to let in the thought that religion was a good thing, a thing absolutely necessary to be possessed in order to go to Heaven; but that a future time, a more convenient season, in retirement and old age, then was time enough to become wise, good, and religious. The present thought was consequently shaken off with as much force as fire would have been from clothing; and therefore it came to pass with him as it did with one of old, who said, "Go thy way, I will hear thee at a more convenient season," that the more convenient season never came. The time came, indeed, when he felt his need of the comforts of religion, but the time never came when he possessed them; for in him appeared to be fulfilled that solemn passage of holy writ: "Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their

own way, and be filled with their own devices." (Prov. i. 24—31.)

When the Physician pronounces a man's life in danger, it is a common thing to send for the Clergyman to prepare his soul for eternity. It was my lot to be sent for in the present instance, at such a juncture. The poor sufferer was in great bodily pain, and in still greater mental agony, which he said arose from the unprepared state of his soul for eternity ; he declared himself a sinner, a sinner justly deserving hell : could I give him any hope, could I afford him any relief ? The remedy which I then, and which I ever have, proposed to my fellow sinners, was the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God, which an inspired Apostle declares, "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The sum and substance of it is, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Herein I endeavoured to point out to him, as I would to you, 1st. That the person spoken of is the Son of God, who was the Creator of the world, as declared in John i. 3, and Hebr. i. 2. 2nd. That it is recorded of Him, that He took upon him our nature, and came into the world, as we read in Philip. ii. 6, 7. 3rd. That the purpose for which he came into the world, was to save sinners ; and in order to this, he became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.

Observe, whom did he come to save ? The righteous ? nay, the passage says, sinners, that is both you and me. What an unspeakable comfort to know, that he died the just for the unjust to bring us to God. (1 Pet. iii. 18.) This is a faithful or true saying. This we know from the sure word of prophecy, testifying of

Jesus many hundreds of years before. We know it also from the miracles of Jesus, which could have been wrought only by an Almighty arm. We know it from the triumphs of the religion of Jesus over the heathen world, and from the experience of individual believers triumphing over death and the grave. We know it not only from the word, but from the oath of Jehovah himself. Furthermore, the passage declares that this saying is worthy of our acceptation. Of yours and mine, because the remedy suits our wants. We are sinners; all are sinners; but we are not excluded, for he came not to "call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." This is worthy to be received, not only by the most abandoned, but also by the strictest Pharisee; or neither will be counted worthy of Heaven.

I have been thus particular in giving you, as I trust I did to him, the only remedy whereby a dying guilty man can be saved; the theme I had occasion frequently to vary, (for I saw him often for several months,) but the substance of it remained the same. And now methinks you are anxious to know what reception it met with; but I cannot satisfy you till I have made a few observations on his case. It was very evident that he laboured for several days under a strong fear of death, the prospect of which makes even the stoutest heart to faint, when unaccompanied by the consolations of the Gospel. At such a time it is to be observed that many appear to drink in eagerly the glad tidings of salvation, and like drowning men to catch at any thing within their reach to buoy them up; but let this fear be removed, and what do we behold? A sad reverse—inattention, apathy, and neglect to our message. If health and strength be restored, we may indeed for a

few Sundays see their accustomed place filled in the Church, but even this is of short duration; and in the end, we observe it happeneth unto them according to the true Proverb, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter ii. 22.)

(To be Continued.)

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 188.)

(3) *Love.* Love adds weight to the soul, and suffers not the affections easily to be divorced from the endeared object. The holy angels are fixed in their standing, by grace as the principle cause, by the purity of their love, as the internal principle. An intelligent and purified love will not forsake a choice object. The iron mixed with dressy particles, runs not so quick, nor sticks so close to the loadstone, as the refined and best tempered steel. Men embrace not the truth, as truth, for want of faith, and they fall from it for want of love; "They receive not the love of truth." (2 Thes. ii. 10.) They receive the truth, but not the love of the truth. The purer our love, the faster we shall stick to that rock which is our strength. God is the strength of those that love him; "I will love thee, O Lord my strength." (Psalm xviii. 1.)

(4.) *Humility.* God gives grace to the humble; then surely the greatest supplies of grace in ~~our~~ deepest exercise of humility. We should find the very workings of God's grace more powerful in us, in the very exercise of this grace. Christ finds those most strange

to him, that are most proud of themselves. He that is not sensible of his own weakness, is never like to have recourse to another for strength. To trust in our grace, is to make our grace a god, because the principal object of the creature's trust is God, and it belongs to him to be so, as the highest good. Now to make our inherent grace the chief object of our trust, is to own it to be as good as God, and as sufficient as God to keep its standing. A conceit of our strength may make us seem bigger, but in reality it makes us weaker. All the humours in the soul meet in its reigning pride. Fearfulness of ourselves is a good prologue to firmness in God; it will make us more strongly lay hold of his power, and more earnestly plead his faithfulness. Exercise it most after the conquest of a temptation; then it is our time to take heed of spiritual pride, we may else overcome one temptation, and sink under another. Pride after a victory gives the enemy an opportunity of success upon a new assault with a fresh recruit. Humility is as necessary to preserve us after a conquest, as faith was to arm and strengthen us for it.

7. Frequently renew settled and holy resolutions. A soldier unresolved to fight, may easily be defeated. True and sharpened courage treads down those difficulties which would triumph over a cold and wavering spirit. Resolution in a weak man will perform more than strength in a coward. The weakness of our graces, the strength of our temptations, and the diligence of our spiritual enemies, require strong resolutions. We must be "steadfast and unmoveable, and this will make us abound in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.) Abundant exercise in God's work,

will strengthen the habit of grace, increase our skill in the contest, and make the victory more easy and pleasant to us. Let them be believing, humble resolutions in the strength of God's grace, with a jealousy of yourselves; not a vaunting resolution in the strength of your own wills; a fear of ourselves, but a confidence in God. David bound himself to God with a hearty vow, depending upon his strength. "I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments." (Psal. cxix. 106) "I have sworn," &c. but not in his own strength, for ver. 107, he desires God to quicken him, and to accept the "free-will offering of his mouth," ver. 108, *i. e.* the oath which proceeded from a free and resolved will. God will not slight, but strengthen the affectionate resolutions of his creatures. We cannot keep ourselves from falling, if we first keep not our resolutions from flagging.

(*To be Concluded in our next*)

THE CONSCIENTIOUS POOR WOMEN.

Two years ago, during the Whitsuntide Festival, a grand wrestling-match with other sports were held in my parish. These unchristian "revellings" were chiefly got up and supported by persons from whose wealth and station better things might have been expected. A considerable sum was speedily raised to be laid out in prizes, &c., and the games took place, followed by the usual sad consequences of *drunkenness, fighting, swearing, waste of hard-earned wages, and unfitness, and aversion to return again to work.* Holding it to be my duty as a Minister and professing Christian not only "to sigh and cry for the abominations that were done," but to use what influence I pos-

sessed in checking such practices, I preached on the preceding Sunday with direct reference to the games, and have reason to believe that the Sermon was not lost upon several of the congregation, who were led to examine and consider the *real* nature and tendency of such pursuits, and to see that the *time past* of our life might suffice us to have wrought the will of the heathens, when we walked in lusts, *revellings*, &c. (1 Peter iv. 1—3.) On the following morning whilst thinking in my study what effect my Sermon might produce, I was told that two women were at the door, and wished particularly to see me. ‘Sir,’ said one of them, ‘we don’t know what to do; we had laid out our little savings in gingerbread to sell on the wrestling ground, but last night we were at Church, and Oh Sir, after what you told us in your Sermon, it seemed to us that we should be helping on the devil’s work if we sold one crumb to the people at the game field.’ Are you willing, I asked, to lose the gingerbread? They readily replied *yes*, though I perceived that they felt it would be a great sacrifice. Finding they were willing to suffer for Christ’s sake, and honest to their convictions, I bought in their little stock at its value. May others go and do like these poor women, and they will then learn the truth of that Scripture, “Them that honor me, I will honor.” (1 Saml. ii. 30.).

A CURATE.

VERSE SYSTEM.

Verse 18. “Known unto God are all his works,” &c. These are the words of the Apostle, added to shew the Jews that they had no reason to be offended with the admission of the Gentiles into the same privileges

with themselves, as if it had been some new doctrine; or innovation, because it was clear from the prophecy just mentioned that it had been the purpose of God that it should be so from the beginning; therefore they must look upon the actual calling of the Gentiles as nothing more nor less than the execution of one of those works which had been planned and arranged in his Eternal mind "from the beginning of the world." (Ephes. i. 10.)

Verse 20. To preserve peace and unity between the believing Jew and the believing Gentile, the Jew must not trouble, or *lay a needless yoke upon*, the Gentile; and the Gentile must abstain from what would give offence to the Jew. "From pollution of idols;" from eating meats which had been offered to idols. It was the custom of the heathen, after offering their sacrifices to their idol gods, to make a feast upon the flesh, and occasions would happen when they might invite to the feast their Christian neighbours. (1 Cor. x. 27.) Now we know there could be no real pollution to the mind in eating such flesh, yet because it became to the believing Jew, who was still through weakness attached to the ceremonies of the law, a stumbling-block, by leading him to think that the Gentile believer complied with the heathen in inward communion with him in his false worship,* they must

* The eating of the flesh of the sacrifice was a sign of communion with Him to whom the sacrifice was offered, and with those that shared in it, under the law of Moses, as well as in all Heathen nations, copying it from thence. So the Lord's Supper is called the *communion* of the body and blood of Christ. (1 Cor. x. 16,) because in partaking of the signs of that sacrifice, we shew forth our *communion* (as believers) with Him and with all who join with us in it. So the eating that which had been offered to an Idol shewed as if they had fellowship with it, and with those that still as heathens worshipped it.

abstain, for their sake alone, from this *appearance* of evil. "And fornication." There is more difficulty in this. We know that fornication, in the meaning we commonly attach to it, would be as much a sin in the esteem of the believing Gentile, as in that of the believing Jew; but here the Apostle is evidently speaking of practices to be abstained from, not because they were positively evil in themselves, but to take away a stumbling-block from the Jews, who counted them as evil. By fornication here is *probably* meant the marrying within the degrees prohibited by the law of Moses, (Lev. xviii. 1—18,) which, according to that law, would be held as fornication by the Jew; but the force of which the believing Gentile, ignorant of that law, would not feel.* "And from things strangled, and from blood." It is evident that the eating of blood with the flesh, and therefore the killing of an animal in any way in which the blood was not first poured out, was forbidden both to Noah, and by the law of Moses, chiefly, because it was continually used in the sacrifices as typical of the blood of Christ. The blood of "bulls and goats" therefore being consecrated by God as the sustaining prop. of the believer's faith till the blood of Christ was actually shed, to have applied it to a common use† would have taught them to count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing—*to* ...¹ Perhaps the having more wives than one, may also be included in this meaning.

* The case of the Corinthians, perhaps, may illustrate this. In consequence of their not discerning the Lord's body, not partaking with a feeling impression of the difference between the bread and wine as the consecrated symbol of the body and blood of Christ, and bread and wine in its common use, they fell into a great profanation of the ordinance. Such would have been the case with the Jew without this precept.

have low views of the great truth, that “without shedding of blood there is no remission.” But though all this was done away in Christ, yet as sacrifices were still offered in the temple, and the light to see that he was the “end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,” broke so slowly even upon the believing Jew, the abstaining from this would take away another stumbling-block in the way of the Jews receiving the Gospel. The reason of this compliance with the scruples of the “weak brother” having long since passed away, there being no hint of the necessity of its farther observance throughout the Epistles, the knowledge that under the Gospel dispensation “every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused,” and the appointment of an ordinance expressly for the strengthening of our faith in the blood of that atonement by which our eternal redemption has been obtained—an ordinance in which the same end answered by the consecration of “the blood of bulls and of goats” to the believing Jew, is now answered to the believing Gentile, by the partaking of the milder symbols of bread and wine—it seems wonderful that any should have put a yoke upon their own necks, or those of others, by still insisting upon this ceremonial observance.

Verse 21. “For Moses of old,” &c. This is given as the reason why the Gentile should comply in these things. It was no wonder that the Jews should be zealous for their law of Moses, since it was read to them every Sabbath-day. In parts of that law they would hear all these things forbidden; but if they saw that the Gentiles still practised them, they would never agree to unite with them as believers: therefore let

them even abridge themselves of their Christian liberty, rather than cause a weak brother to offend.

Verse 22—34. (August 14—26.) The steps taken by the Church at Jerusalem to make known the decision of the assembled council on this question, the arrival of Paul and Barnabas, Judas and Silas, and others at Antioch, with the epistles of the Church.

Verse 24. (August 16.) “Troubling you with words subverting your souls.” It is a device of Satan eagerly received in these unbelieving times, that all is to be sacrificed for peace—even truth itself; that such and such a difference is a mere question of words, and thus the “faith once delivered to the saints” is given up, instead of being boldly contended for, forgetful that a false faith as surely subverts the soul as evil practice.

Verse 31. “Rejoiced for the consolation”—that they were still to walk in the liberty of the Gospel.

Verse 35—41. (August 27 to Sept. 2.) Paul and Barnabas, after continuing in Antioch some time, determine to visit all the churches again; their difference of opinion about Mark; contention and final separation.

Verse 37. (August 29.) “John whose surname was Mark.” Chap. xiii. 5. Barnabas might be unduly influenced by the tie of relationship. (Coloss. iv. 10.)

Verse 38. “Thought not good;” ‘did not judge it reasonable to make him partake of the blessing and honor of reaping the harvest of the Churches, who would not be with them at the sowing;’ intending it as a mild and just punishment on him for leaving them in the midst of their work. (Ch. xiii. 13.)



THE GOOD PHYSICIAN.

"I will come and heal him."—*Matt. viii. 7.*

WOND'ROUS Physician! gracious Lord!
How shall I bless thee for thy word—
What proofs of power and grace are there,
What miracles of love appear.

When for "the servant" prayer was made,
Quickly he sent thine healing aid—
The palsied frame, that "self-same hour,"
Obey'd thy will, confess'd thy power.

O Lord, my malady I feel,
Then have compassion—"come and heal"—
Thy grace to others bids me pray,
For none were sent unbless'd away.

The invitations of thy word,
Encouragement and hope afford;
They point to Jesus as the way—
Whistl' heav'nly whispers seem to say—

'Dost thou now sigh to "be made whole?"'
Look to my blood, poor sin-sick soul;
My grace can unbelief remove—
Can give thee faith, and make thee love.'

O sov'reign Healer! gracious Lord,
Speak to my soul the healing word;
From self and sin now set me free,
And let me live, dear Lord, to thee.

J. W. M.

R. H. A. Simeon, (Penheale-Press) Cornwall.

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THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

No. XIII.

'THE SEA.'

'And thou majestic main!
—A secret world of wonders in thyself—
Sound his stupendous praise, whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.'

In making the Sea the subject of some further reflections, we may first take a glance at the inhabitants of its waters. The Sea is a world in itself, and as richly furnished as the land with innumerable varieties of plants and animals. And these furnish the Natu-

ralist with continual occupation, while he observes how well constructed their organs are to the element in which they live ; how infinitely varied and how full of beauty and curious contrivance. He who had never seen a fish would be almost incredulous of the existence of such creatures, so widely different is their organization from that of land animals. Arguing from the effects which an immersion for any considerable season under the water has upon the human frame, he would perhaps pronounce it to be impossible that any creatures should live there and multiply. But so wisely has the Creator fashioned these animals, that the water is to them as natural an element as the air is to us ; but what is still more wonderful, though they live in their own element, they breathe air also, and by the peculiar construction of their gills, are enabled to take in the air with which the water is saturated, while at the same time the water is excluded. When we attentively consider the curious provision of their internal structure, and connect it with their external covering, we shall be still more deeply impressed with the peculiar adaptation of their bodies to the element in which they live and move and have their being. How beautifully have they been clothed by the Author of nature ; not indeed with silks and furs, for this would be unsuitable to their situation, but with an armour of glittering scales, or plates, far more curious and more protective than that which was worn by the proud knights of old in fields of chivalry ! Men have rivalled each other in their houses and castles, but how inferior have all these been in comparison with those inhabited by the Crab, the Oyster, the Tortoise, and all the shelly tribes. No wonder then that the

book of Job should appeal to this part of the creation for some of the most striking proofs of his handy-work:—"Ask nowand the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" (Job xii. 7.)

Fertility is another striking circumstance by which the tribes of the ocean are distinguished.* What can equal the prodigious numbers in which these multiply! Here is an instance of thy liberality, O thou God of Providence! When thou didst pronounce thy benediction on the works of thine hand, thou didst distinguish the fish from the rest, and put an emphasis upon it; and while thou didst give a commission to other creatures to be fruitful and multiply, thou didst direct "the water to bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." (Gen. i. 20.)

It is worthy of remark that Christ chose several of his Apostles from the humble rank of fishermen, to denote perhaps not so much the necessity of humility in his followers, as to intimate that the province of their labours, though apparently barren and dangerous, was not so in reality, but abundantly stocked with every spiritual product, and containing a richer harvest of the heirs of the kingdom of heaven than any former dispensation; a harvest which indeed only awaits the throwing forth of the gospel-net more extensively and faithfully by the appointed fishers of

* 'When I went to view the Port of Dieppe,' says the author of a celebrated work, 'they brought us a very fine cod. I was curious to count the eggs she contained; in order to which I took as many as weighed a drachm, and having three of us engaged to number them, and then weighed the whole, the aggregate sums produced were nine millions, three hundred and forty-four eggs.'

men to make it universal, and to realize the splendid prophecy, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. ii. 14.)

Many, indeed, and vast are the ideas which a sight of the blue ocean may suggest; and he who can walk on its shores and cast his eye over the mighty expanse; he who can behold its rippling waves or its foaming billows without feeling a deep emotion from the source of all that is beautiful awful and sublime rushing upon his soul, must be dead to all true sensibility. In the presence of such a scene, few will refuse to join with the poet when he exclaims,—

With wonder mark the moving wilderness of waves,
From pole to pole through boundless space diffused,
Magnificently dreadful! where at large,
Leviathan, with each inferior name
Of sea-born kinds—ten thousand tribes—
Finds endless range for pasture and for sport.

————— Adoring own
The hand Almighty, who its channell'd bed
Immeasurable sunk, and poured abroad;
Fence'd with eternal mounds the fluid sphere,
With every wind to waft large commerce on,
Join pole to pole, consociate sever'd worlds,
And link in bonds of intercourse and love
Earth's universal family.

Here it is that we may contemplate the Great Governor of the Universe in some of the noblest of his attributes, and in some of the grandest of his dispensations. Here it is that he talks with man in the voice of the roaring billows. How awful the sound that proclaims his majesty, and seems to say in the language of the Prophet, "I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea whose waves roared; the Lord of Hosts is his name!" With what rapidity do the thoughts take

Their flight to that day of Israel's redemption, when he, "whose way is in the sea and whose footsteps are in the deep waters," manifested how easily he could make the most terrible of his works subservient to the safety and deliverance of his chosen! With what delight also may we look down upon the stormy waves, when we think that the Saviour of sinners walked upon them with the same ease as upon the solid rock; and that his voice of "Peace be still" calmed in a moment the fury of the roaring billows. What confidence therefore may we not place in him, who, with the same voice that stilled the tempest, will speak pardon, peace, and salvation to all his true disciples, when the floods of Almighty wrath shall again rush forth to overwhelm an unbelieving world! Grand also and solemn are the thoughts which come over us as we listen again to the sound of the waves, and remember that it is compared by St. John to the voice of the redeemed multitude in heaven shouting forth their combined hallelujahs around the throne of God. (Rev. xix. 6.) And equally noble and majestic is the idea of another Apostle, who standing as it were on the shore of a measureless ocean, beholds there the image of those fathomless mysteries of redeeming love which he had been considering, and exclaims in amazement, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.)

But the reflections which here present themselves are not confined to the serious Christian, or to the naturalist. The man who possesses any reflection must be interested at beholding in the ocean, under its various aspects, a striking picture of the moral

world in general, and of what is passing there. View it at certain seasons, and what can appear more tempting and inviting. But under the smiling and deceitful surface, how often are there concealed dangerous rocks and quicksands on which the unskilful mariner will strike and be lost. The Sea also, as well as the world in general, exhibits the marks of that curse under which the whole creation groaneth and travailleth. It abounds with creatures pursuing and devouring each other ; the small and the weak becoming a prey to the great and powerful, while in both there is a grand destroyer—a Leviathan taking his pasture, and seeking the perdition of all. View the Sea also when agitated by winds, and then how fitly does its commotion represent the restlessness and fury of godless men, impeded hither and thither by the breath of their wild and ungovernable passions. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God to the wicked.” (Isai. lvii. 20, 21.) But thus it has ever been. Turbulence and strife are as natural to all unconverted men, as confusion and uproar is to the ocean. Hence the Psalmist, referring us to the power of him who stilleth the noise of the seas, speaks of the tumult of the waves and the madness of the people in one breath, to shew that they are the same in character. So likewise St. Jude forcibly painting the character of the wicked schismatics of his own day, and of the last days, compares them most forcibly to roaring waves of the sea foaming out their own shame. How full of sacred significance therefore are those sublime visions, in which at one time St. John contemplates that new heavens and new earth, where

there shall be no more Sea : (Rev. xxi. 1) and at another, beholds heaven itself opened, and a victorious host, having the harps of God, standing upon a sea of glass, mingled with fire (Rev. xv. 2) to celebrate their victory : as if to convey the strongest idea of the glorious tranquillity of their redeemed state when contrasted with their former scenes of tribulation and tumult amidst the stormy billows of an evil and perilous world !

What a different series of ideas crowd upon us from the Sea, when we look at the ships that are crossing to and fro upon its ample bosom ! How naturally does the Psalmist, while looking at a similar spectacle, observe, "There go the ships !" What a number of interesting reflections are included in these few words ! *Ships* and the *Ocean* are the connecting links of that great chain of existence that runs round the globe. What unites the merchant of England and the merchant of India ? What enables the poor man of our own country to make the comforts and luxuries of distant lands his own ? What furnishes the Christian Missionary with the means of carrying the glad tidings of salvation to the New Zealand Cannibals—the Antipodes of the British shores ? What has brought about this connexion with the opposite regions of the earth's surface, but ships and the ocean ? ships which display as much of the mastery of human art, as the ocean does of the wonders of the divine hand. Who then when he thus looks at the blessings enjoyed ; at the combination of advantages thus resulting from the ocean ; can refuse a tribute of praise and adoration to him who made the Sea for the same purpose as he made the land, to shew forth his glory, and to teach,

man his dependance upon him “ who sitteth above the water flood, and remaineth a King for ever ! ”

Valuable, however, as the ocean is to man, and richly as he is indebted for it to the Lord of all, there is one thing but for which its value would have been but little known. Without the magnet man would never have obtained that dominion over the seas, which Providence has assigned him in the present day. And viewing this fact in regard to the spiritual consequences that may now result from it, and which have already resulted from it in the conversion of many a heathen, we can only look upon it as another proof of that divine superintendance in human affairs which nature and revelation abundantly declare. Looking also at the Sea as an emblem of the present world, we have reason to bless God that he has not left man to chance or skill in crossing the great ocean of human life. What the mariner’s compass is to the seaman, the Bible is to the Christian ; it is the heavenly needle by which he may steer his bark through the waves of time, and direct his course to a better land. Happy, thrice happy, is the man, who with Christ for his Pilot, and the holy gales of the Spirit to waft him onwards in his voyage, keeps his eye continually on the compass ; for thus will he be enabled to navigate with skill and safety all the seas he may have to cross; to weather out all the storms of life, and at length, like some gallant ship that has long and nobly buffeted with the waves, to drop anchor in the haven of eternal blessedness.

E. B.

DEATH OF AN UNBELIEVER.

(Continued from page 208.)

My visits for several days I could perceive were very welcome ; my message appeared to meet with a gracious reception. The fixed eye, the anxious look, while I declared the "words of life," denoted something more than attention, (perhaps anxiety might best describe the feeling.) The big tear rolling down his emaciated cheeks, seemed to intimate that contrition was now at length reducing the stout heart of the rebel ; and the hearty amen, which appeared to flow spontaneously at the end of my prayers, best shewed both fervency and desire. But the sterling quality of such penitence and desire was not to be determined in a moment ; for my own part, having been often deceived in this matter, I am now slow to judge, or rather judge not at all, till time becomes my interpreter. A time of trial or temptation is absolutely necessary in order for us to see what others are made of, yea even to see what we ourselves are made of. Do we stand the fire ? Do we come out of it purified ? If not the metal is not genuine. Such a time of trial soon came. The extreme pain of the patient's disease somewhat abated, and this produced a hope of recovery, though it was apparent to myself and others he had undergone no radical change for the better ; that the seeds of death were sown, and he was a dying man.

About this time it appeared he had two remarkable dreams, which seemed to assure him he would recover in a certain time. His medical man before this had stated, that within a given period he should be as well as ever, in which perhaps the dreams might have originated ; but that these dreams, begun by a lie in the

right hand of man, were weapons which Satan wielded for his destruction, I have not the least doubt, for I am one of those old fashioned people who believe my Bible, and consequently in satanic influence, and moreover that this influence is mighty and powerful to the destruction of men's souls, as it is written, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephes. vi. 12.) One thing, however, was very certain, a belief had entered his mind that he should recover, notwithstanding he had been told by myself and others he was dying. It was now evident to me that this was the time for the trial of his faith, his sifting time, when I should discover the reality and sincerity of the profession he had made when he found himself in the deeps; the time when I should be satisfied whether he had sorrowed after a godly manner, or possessed only the sorrow of the world which worketh death. I observed that his attention to spiritual things increased or diminished in proportion to the hope he had of life, making it very clear that it was the fear of death which had caused all his sorrow and all his tears, and not the "fear of the Lord which is clean, and endureth for ever." Very soon did I perceive that "all his goodness was only as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, that goeth away." Very soon did I feel my visits were unwelcome, and that I was listened to with impatience; that the business of the farm, and the things of the present world, usurped a greater share of his affections than the things of God; that the world was still in his heart, and the men of this world his desire. He now began to raise cavils about

the Christian faith, which led me to believe that his illness, instead of being sanctified to him, had made him ten-fold more the child of the devil.

Are you among the number of those who are purposing to transact the concerns of the soul, and to mind the things of eternity, on a death bed? How do you know you will die in your bed? Or, if you do, whether God will then give you repentance and faith? What if he were to reject you, and to reproach you thus?—‘Thou hast spent the prime of thy days, the vigour of thy youth, the strength of thy manhood in the service of the world and of Satan, and now thou offerest to me the dregs of thy existence. I reject such unworthy services. Go to thy lords; see what they can now do for thee. Other lords have had dominion over thee, they must lord it over thee still.’ Dost thou think that thy Minister can do aught for thee at this awful crisis? He can administer his medicines it is true; but one ray of hope in your soul is beyond his creating. He cannot give penitence and faith, because this is his Master’s work; he may pray for thee, but he cannot make thee everlastingly happy.

The greatest difficulty that aged persons meet with in learning the truths of the Gospel, consists in their unlearning the systems of self-righteousness and error in which they have been brought up. Hence we see the necessity of impressing on the infant mind right principles of religion. I was forcibly struck with this fact when one day setting forth the absolute necessity of believing in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and declaring that there was no other name under heaven given among men whereby we might be saved, that the suffering man replied, ‘If what you say be true, my

fathers and my friends, where are they? Besides, it seems to me, if I were God Almighty, I could not serve my son as you say he served his. I don't see the need of all this.' In vain did I urge the absolute necessity of God's punishing his dear Son to save sinners. In vain did I urge that his many wants, his great necessities, should lead him to lay aside all caviling and unbelief, and to receive thankfully what God had so freely and so graciously given. All was to no purpose. The fact was to him incomprehensible; the truth of which he neither desired to receive nor believe. Learn then how impossible it is for the natural man even to comprehend, much more to believe, the things of God, and the absolute necessity of being born again in order to receive them. Dost thou object to the term? Do you urge, like one of old, how can a man be born when he is old? I would answer you in the words of Holy writ; "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

The sick man grew worse, and his faith in life began again to be shaken; now it was that he was desirous to receive some strong consolation in some shorter and easier way than the Gospel way of repentance and faith. To what shifts does the devil drive men; alas, it drove him to consider the receiving of the communion of the body and blood of Christ would be a passport to heaven, and accordingly expressed a desire to receive it. This I thought a favourable opportunity for calling in a brother Clergyman, who might judge of his state, and give him farther ghostly counsel and advice.

(To be Concluded in our next)

THE HURLERS.



THE Hurlers (of which a sketch is given above) are well known in the neighbourhood of Liskeard. They consist of a number of large stones placed upright in a circular form, and stand on the open common southwest of Cheesewring. The general opinion is that they were so erected by the Druids; but the story goes that they once were *men*, who, while playing at Hurling (an old Cornish game) on the Sabbath, were suddenly changed to stone. Although wishing to see ignorant notions and superstitions vanish away like the moor fog before the sun, we should be almost sorry to part with this story of the Hurlers; for these stones might serve, like Lot's wife, as a warning to Sabbath breakers, and give a silent hint to those who smile at the tradition, that God will not be mocked. 'Nonsense,' perhaps some visitor of the Hurlers might reply to the shepherd or turf cutter, who tells him that these stones were once men. And yet the change after all would not be so wonderful. These Sabbath players were, as regards spiritual things, but *stones*; they knew no more and felt no more about God than *stones*. The preached word evidently worked no more effect upon them than on *stones*; and many of those that

look upon them, are even like unto them. "Their heart is as firm as a stone, yea as hard as the nether millstone;" and until God takes from them that heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh, neither invitation nor terrors will persuade them. T.R.E.

WEAK GRACE VICTORIOUS.

(Continued from page 210.)

8. Look often back upon your state under convictions, and the first state of conversion. Measure your present complexion by your former temper. Cast up your accounts often, and see whether you thrive or decay; and renew your former dispositions. It is our Saviour's counsel; "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works," (Rev. ii. 5.) which cannot be done without reflection upon thy wonted delight in God, thy desires for him, and the sweet communications dispensed by him. Inquire into the cause of thy decay. This is a necessary attendant upon this act of remembrance; for it is not a bare simple act of memory Christ commands, but a diligent inquisition by a practical remembrance. A timely observance of the cause of our loss, will prevent many future ones; without this act, Satan will creep in and finish his business before we are aware. It is a pleasure to reflect upon the time of danger wherein we have been, and to recount the methods God used in our delivery, and the resolutions we then entertained; "Thy heart shall meditate terror," (Isa. xxxiii. 18) i. e. thou shalt consider what thy troubles were, what the frame of thy heart was, what terrors thou hadst

in thy distress ; for it is spoken of the gospel-times, when they shall *see the King in his beauty.*

So likewise it is useful to recall to our memory what desires, what fervency in prayer, what holy vows there were in, and upon us, when we were under a wounded spirit, and act the same fervours over again. This would restore and inflame the heart more in duty, and enable thee for the contest, by calling into thy assistance the supplies of all the habitual grace thou hast had since those first heats. Remember then the strength of thy appetite to the word ; how your zeal did glow, what sprightliness in your affections, with what devotion your prayers were winged, with what stoutness your faith did breathe, how high it did climb, with what detestation you entertained the motions to sin, with what courage you entered into the lists of temptations, how quick and nimble your obedience was, what a freshness and verdure was upon all your graces. Remember those, and do the same works.

9. *Cherish any breathing* of the Spirit. Man is unable to keep his knowledge and evangelical impressions upon himself without the Spirit ; "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us." (2 Tim. i. 14.) If we cannot keep the knowledge and form of sound words, agreeable to the affection in man whereby he desires knowledge, much less can we preserve grace in us, which is more stomached by corrupted nature. Men have a natural desire to know, but no natural desire to be gracious. Christ promised the Spirit to abide with us, and shall we slight his harbingers which come to prepare the way for a more powerful residence ?

We can never prize the assistance of the Holy Ghost, if we neglect the auxiliary force he sends us. Those heavenly motions are the Spirit's orders. How can we expect to gain the victory, when we neglect the directions and conduct of our great General?

Perseverance is no more to be ascribed to our own wills, than our first conversion. As without the Spirit we could never by the power of our own wills turn to God, so without the continuance of his efficacy, the will would never keep with God, but would start from him. We are forgetful creatures, therefore need a monitor; stupid creatures, therefore need a quickener. The main reason of our falls is a non-attendance to those motions; for we cannot ascribe them to the Spirit's carelessness, but our own. We cannot suppose him to be negligent in his office, but ourselves in our duty. Grace cannot live, if you neglect this oil put into the lamp to preserve it from expiring. The Spirit's motions are the physic he uses for the removal of that which endangers the health of our grace, and cordials to strengthen the languishing spiritual nature to a recovery of itself. Neglect him not therefore; but when you find him turning his back, withdrawing his motions, and beginning to grieve, do what you can to delight him. Beg, pray, cry, with an holy imitation of *David*, "Lord take not thy holy Spirit from me." (Ps. li. 11.)

10. Take frequent views of glory. A heavenly conversation will quicken our graces, enliven our duties; while the vigour of both is kept up the heart cannot flag in the ways of God. Can a man be lazy in a duty, when he considers he must pray, hear, meditate, walk for heaven? The heat of our graces

will be purer and more durable, when we approach nearest, and lie closest under the sun-beams. Glory in the eye will encourage grace in the heart, and quicken a resolution against temptations, and contempt of the foolish pleasures and enticements of the world, as the glory set before Christ made him despise the shame of the cross.

To conclude the whole.

(1.) Look to the *first* flagging of thy heart, thy *first* remissness in religious duties. Slothful proceedings become not fervent beginnings.

(2.) Be much in the duty of *mortification*. Shake off every weight, (Heb. xii. 1,) that may weaken thee in thy course. Those that are to run a race, or go to a battle, carry not burdens with them.

(3.) Entertain wise considerations of the *worst that may happen* in your christian course. Prepare against the worst, though it may never come upon you. Consider the fury of persecutors, the diligence of the devil, the multitude of temptations, and what promises are suited to elevate you above them.

(4.) Remember the *promise*. This will still us in our wavering ; “ Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering : for he is faithful that promised.” (Heb. x. 23.) (*Concluded.*)

A THOUGHT ON CANTICLES ii. 4.

He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.

HADST thou been left, O my soul, to thy own will, and the way of thine own wisdom, couldst thou ever have known Jesus ? though he be the Lovely One, and

Holy One, thou wouldest never have sought, couldst never have found him. It was his own Spirit that led thee, opening thine eyes, convincing thy conscience, drawing thee to Christ, whose grace he caused thee to know, and to believe. Lord Jesus ! thy grace is grace indeed. My poor heart would boast in thee ; and while thou makest me to sit down among thy guests I would have a sweet sadness steal over my spirit, remembering that I was sometime darkness, sometime an enemy (while yet thy love was set upon me, and my name was in thy book) ; the bitter herbs shall make my banquet the richer feast, while I cry, with thy Church, ‘All we, like sheep, have gone astray ; but on thee was laid the iniquity of us all.’ Oh thou crowned King ! who is like unto thee ? Thou Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified One ! Thou exalted and abased One. Thou dost rule me with Almighty love. Thy sceptre is thy grace, or my heart were not thine. A bare word of thy power might destroy me ; only thy kindness and grace can melt and win me, and thou hast won me. Thou shewest me thy wounds and thy crown of thorns ; and while speaking peace in thy blood to my troubled soul, thou bindest me with thy cords of love, and with the bands of a man. Lord Jesus ! thou givest me by thy gracious visits a brief heaven that stays so long as may serve to cheer me by the way, and to quicken my longing to see thee as thou art. My soul avouches it indeed a part of heaven when thou dost fill me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I see myself within the ark ; and since the Lord’s hand has shut me in, I cry who shall separate ? My soul at leisure surveys thy glory, and sits down with thee upon thy throne, and thy fullness (for thou

art Immanuel) satiates me. In thee I see my Father's heart, (which is also thy Father) the mysteries of whose counsel thou dost unlock; 'and I cry out, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." Sweet is our mutual love—mine to thee. Thou dost delight in, and thine to me is my strength and banner; it engages thee to take hold on Shield and Buckler, and stand up for my help. In the light of thy love I walk at liberty, perceiving and avoiding my enemies snares; and to idols I say, 'Depart, for my soul is the temple of my Lord.'

My glorious and gracious Lord! thou hast said, "Behold I come quickly." Oh keep thy word. Even so, Jesus, come quickly: and let my soul, without enemies to vex, or sin to pollute it, repose in thy presence, be filled with thy glory, and so for ever enjoy the banquet of thy love.

VERSE SYSTEM.

Verse 39. "The contention was so sharp;" who that had seen those holy men sent to make up differences between others would have thought of seeing them so soon divided from one another! Oh, what is man at his best estate! Well, painfully well, does the Apostle's history in this place illustrate his doctrine and experience in another—"when I would do good evil is present with me;" and how often does the most advanced believer find that whilst nothing but good is his aim and intention, the execution is marred by some evil passion which the evil one is ever on the watch to stir up. The natural benevolence of Barnabas seems to have led him to forget the need of exercising

deserved reproof towards Mark; and the no less naturally vehement spirit of Paul perhaps caused him to forget the “longsuffering” manner of doing it, which in another instance he strikingly recommends.* At any rate there was a breach of that charity which “is not easily provoked.”† 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

Verse 40. (September 1.) “Being recommended by the brethren” &c.; these words seem clearly to shew that the Church approved of the Apostle’s determination in this matter.

Chap. xvi. v. 1—12. (September 3—14.) Paul taking Timothy with them, having fulfilled his intention of visiting the churches, (Chap. xv. 36,) being forbidden to preach in Asia, by special revelation passes into Macedonia, and stays at Philippi.

Verse 3. “Because of the Jews.” The Apostle wanting the help of Timothy in preaching the Gospel to the Jews, and knowing that they would not listen to any uncircumcised person, circumcises him, to take away a stumbling-block in the way of the Jews receiving the Gospel. For though circumcision when insisted on as needful to salvation, was to be rejected as nothing less than a subverting of the soul; (Chap. xv. 24) yet circumcision as a matter of no avail in regard to salvation, (1 Cor. vii. 18, 19. Galat. vi. 15,) might be complied with as a temporary bearing with Jewish prejudices, for the sake of the spread of the Gospel, on the same principle on which the decision (Chap. xv. 20, 21,)‡ was made, which our Apostle mentions elsewhere also. 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. &c.

Verse 4. Chap. xv. 13—29.

* 2 Cor. ii. 7, 8. † The same word is used in the original in both these passages. ‡ See remarks on pages 213, 214.

Verse 8. "Troas." 2 Cor. ii. 12.

Verse 11. "Neapolis." Let us be thankful that God the Holy Spirit has directed our Apostle at length to plant his foot in this quarter of the world to which we belong—Europe.

Verses 13—40. (Sept. 15 to Oct. 12.) Transactions at Philippi; conversion of Lydia; casting out of an evil spirit; persecution of the Apostles in consequence of it; cast into prison; conversion of the gaoler; their honourable dismissal from prison, and departure.

Verse 13. (Sept. 15.) "Where prayer was wont to be made." In this heathen city, the number of the Jews probably being too small, or else not being permitted to have a synagogue, they seem not to have forsaken the assembling of themselves together, but met for prayer on the Sabbath in the most retired place they could find.

Verse 14. "Which worshipped God;" that is like Cornelius and others, "a devout person, according to the law," who, though she walked in comparative darkness, and had not more than the twilight of Jewish knowledge, yet was staying herself upon her God,† waiting upon him according to the light she had.

"Whose heart the Lord opened." In vain do we hear except the Lord open the heart; yet, remember, that it is in hearing that the Lord does open the heart.

Verse 15. "Come into my house." The Jews were persecuted by the Gentiles, but the follower of Jesus had to bear the equal enmity of both. This pressing invitation then given to the preacher of that Cross, which was a stumbling-block to the one and

† Isai. 1. 10.

foolishness to the other, was no small evidence that the Lord had indeed opened her heart.

Verse 16. "Possessed with a spirit of divination." Supposed, in heathen ignorance, to be capable of foretelling things to come, &c., by being possessed of the spirit of the God Apollo, whom they worshipped amongst others; in reality, we see from verse 18, possessed with an evil spirit.

"Much gain by soothsaying." By pretending to prophesy, to discover things lost, &c., for which those that consulted her, of course, paid well her employers.*

Verse 18. "Paul being grieved." This was a wily craft of him who can transform himself into an angel of light; unable to resist the power of the Apostle, he would undermine his authority by pretending to be on his side. The Apostle was grieved; for whilst such is the *power* of truth that it is able to extort a confession of that power not only from wicked men but also from wicked devils, such also is its *purity* that such a testimony would prove more hurtful than the most violent opposition. Therefore, after the example of his great Master,† partly that it might be clear that he had no common cause with such evil spirits, and partly that he might shew that Christ was the conqueror of the Devil, and the spirit of Chris-

* Is it possible that in a Christian land, "much gain" is still made in *the same way*, that if a person has a child, or a cow ill, or when butter wont come, he sends to a witch to know the reason. O Cornwall, Cornwall, when shall the Gospel rid thee of this heathenish blot on thy profession, and teach thee "in every thing" to consult God and not the Devil!

† Mark v. 8. So Christ also would show that he did not cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub.

tianity more mighty than the spirit of idolatry, in the name of Jesus he is enabled to cast him out.

Verse 19. That "the hope of their gains was gone," was the *real* cause of their opposition to the Apostle, zeal for their old superstitions the *pretended* one. How many evil and unchristian practices this "covetousness" upholds publicly and privately, it may be well for those concerned in it to consider!

Verse 27. "Would have killed himself;" The cause of this sudden and desperate resolution was the severe punishment he dreaded. By the Roman law the gaoler was to undergo the same punishment which the prisoner, who escaped by his negligence, was to have suffered. Moreover the awful practice of self-destruction was encouraged both by precept and practice by some of their wisest philosophers and great men.*

Verse 30. "What must I do to be saved;" all that he had seen or heard of the Apostle's doings in the case of the casting out of the evil spirit, all that he had heard of their preaching the way of salvation, all that he had certainly being witness to of their words and feelings in prayer and praise since they had been under his charge, with the miraculous earthquake, we may well believe, rushed upon the gaoler's feelings in his hour of agony; all he had seen and heard tended to convince him—undoubtedly under the Spirit's effectual teaching—that if any could shew him a way of ease and deliverance these were the very persons, and hence the interesting anxious question of the half-despairing, half-hoping penitent. O "what hath God wrought!"

* Two of whom, Brutus and Cassius, had fallen on their own swords in a moment of disappointment at this very place.



THE SWALLOWS.

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming : but my people know not the judgment of the Lord." (Jer. viii. 7.)

WHERE are the swallows gone ?
I lov'd to hear their joyous twitt'ring song
From the brick chimney top, commencing long
Before the summer's dawn.

The martin too has fled :
Above my window still his nest of clay ;
But o'er that clever work of many a day,
Spiders their nets have spread.

Birds ! wherefore did ye fear ?
While all was bright, nor yet the beech nor oak
Had shed a leaf ; nor short'ning days, bespoke
The wintry tempests near ?

Wisely ye knew your time,—
Tho' all was bright, ye must not, would not stay,
But prompt at nature's bidding, wing'd your way
To some unchanging clime.

Man seems alone unblest ;
Heedless of change, he loiters on his road,
Pleas'd with earth's vanities, neglects his God,
And land of heav'nly rest.

Sin, with an iron chain,
Binds down the soul, and helpless there it lies,
Till the Almighty Spirit bids it rise,
And makes resistance vain.

Tan.

LIGHT FROM THE WEST;

OR,

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THE CHRISTIAN NATURALIST.

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THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

THERE is no time of the year when nature puts on such an aspect of sadness and melancholy as now in the present month, when the trees have just lost their verdure and shed their leaves. We cannot help feeling a mournful sensation as we cast our eyes abroad over the hedges and woods lately clad in all the lovely tints of autumn, but now stript of all their gay and cheerful clothing, and reduced as it were to the condition of a beggar who has only a few old scanty patches of rags to conceal his limbs and cover his nakedness. The paths of our gardens and fields are at this season strewn with the spoils of the tempest, with the wreck of that which was once fair as beauty in its spring, and bright as prosperity in its highest noon. Such a spectacle bids us be solemn. Nature is now celebrating the funeral of the past year, and consigning over the beautiful offspring of many months' vegetation to its wintry tomb. Surely there is no one of our readers who does not sympathize with us in the emotions which are due to the season, whose heart is

not now in some degree awakened to serious reflections, or who does not behold in the present decay of the vegetable world, the type of his own mortality, and fully enter into the meaning of the Prophet's language when he observes, "We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away."

All nature is full of the types and shadows of spiritual things. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth wisdom." If man could only listen with a spiritual ear, and behold with a spiritual eye, he would never want instruction. Every page of the book of nature is a commentary on the book of divine truth, and reminds him that there is nothing unchangeable but God; nothing permanent and abiding but his promises; nothing that can at last escape the hand of decay and death, but that wreath of incorruptible glory and victory in the heavenly mansions, which shall be gathered from the tree of life.

To the Christian Naturalist, as well as to the Christian Moralist, there are many ideas suggested by the fallen leaves which every where bestrew his path. He sees, in what these once were, another proof that the divine hand has made nothing in vain. These now withered, but once vital members of the trees around him, were wisely intended to answer the same purpose in the vegetable economy, as the lungs do in the human body, and as the external skin or covering does through which it perspires. They remained however long enough to imbibe that portion of the atmospheric air which was necessary for the circulation of a due supply of sap, and the formation of the new buds for the coming year. And when this purpose

was fully answered they did not fall at once: even then Providence took care that they should decay and wither on the trees themselves, rather than on the ground; for the putrefaction of so much vegetable matter in a green state on the surface of the earth might have been attended with serious consequences to the health of the human race. This therefore was prevented by a gradual decay, and the leaves were also kept long enough on the trees to provide for the safety of the next generation of buds, which were at that time in their infant state; thus affording not only a striking instance of design in the system of natural causes, but furnishing moreover a beautiful picture of the careful provision which is made for the constant renewal of the human race, notwithstanding the regular inroads of death and disease upon the generations of man in every age and country. "One generation," observes a sacred writer, "passeth away and another cometh, but the earth abideth continually." Surely nothing but a divine arrangement could have thus provided for a continual succession; and, when Adam had lost his privilege of being immortal upon earth, have ordained a constant renewal of his posterity from age to age, till the end of all things. If, therefore, in the present season, we behold a monument of desolation, we see also a memorial of God's care and providence! We observe another instance of the mysterious manner in which death and life are linked together! How provision is made for things future, even from the destruction of things present! How in the moral world, as in the natural, God does not suffer individuals or generations to pass away, till they have fulfilled their course, and their places are prepared to

be supplied by others. Thus we learn in silence to adore the all-wise decrees of his Providence, who neither suffers a sparrow nor a leaf to fall to the ground without his knowledge; who is the same God, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, whether he permits his works to be ravaged by the hand of the destroyer, or whether he sends forth his creative Spirit and renews the face of the earth. (Psalm civ. 29—31.)

It is to be observed, however, that all trees do not share alike in the desolation that seems to overspread the face of nature at this season. Some are by habit evergreens, and retain a perennial verdure. And what a happy emblem do these afford us of the manner in which God preserves the graces and virtues of his people, still flourishing and green, as it were, when all around them is barren and desolate. Noah, Joseph, Daniel, and many besides perhaps, in every age of the world, have been thus suffered to stand as illustrious monuments of holiness; men perfect in their generation, whilst the people among whom they lived were grievously corrupt. It is to be remembered then, that those who would resemble them—who would flourish like the fir-tree, or the laurel, amidst the storms and frosts of winter—must have no fellowship with an evil and adulterous generation; for it is written, “The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself,” and he only is pronounced “Blessed who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates in his law day and night.” To him indeed alone the promise belongs—“He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his

fruit in his season : his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

But for those who live without God in the world there is no consolation of this kind in store. Their condition is infinitely more mournful than any thing which is presented by the falling leaf, and the barren and naked branches of the trees of the forest. The forest will burst forth into fresh verdure under the genial influences of spring ; but who can say that those hearts will ever flourish again in the beauty of holiness, which have long lain withering under the curse of sin and unbelief ? He only, who knows all hearts, can determine to what lengths a sinner may go till he places himself beyond the hope of mercy ; but no man may receive the grace of God in vain, and to every man the warning-voice is addressed, " Now also the axe is laid at the root of the tree ; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Matt. iii. 10.)

Spirit, proud spirit, ponder thy state,
If thine the leaf's lightness, not thine the leaf's fate ;
It may flutter, and glisten, and wither, and die;
And heed not our pity, and ask not our sigh ;
But for *thee*, the immortal, no winter may throw
Eternal repose on thy joy and thy woe ;
Thou must live—live for ever—in glory, or gloom,
Beyond the world's precincts—beyond the dark tomb ;
Look to thyself then, ere past is hope's reign,
And looking and longing alike are in vain ;
Lest thou deem it a bliss to have been, or to be,
But a fluttering leaf on yon blasted tree.

E. B.

DEATH OF AN UNBELIEVER.

(Continued from page 228.)

My friend accordingly came at my solicitation. He found the dying man reclining on his pillow, surrounded by his sorrowing relatives. After stating the errand on which he came, he began to descant on the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in that it had caused all the sufferings of the blessed Redeemer; that it had pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief, to wound him for our transgressions, and to lay upon him the iniquities of us all. But, alas, he could see no beauty in him that he should desire him, and he hid as it were his face from him; for he did not even refrain from declaring, that he did not see the necessity for all this: ‘if any one offended him, he could forgive him easily enough, and why not God forgive sinners.’ Yet, said my friend, you desire to receive the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token that he died for sinners. He replied, ‘he did, if he thought proper.’ But this I cannot do, added he, for then I should be giving you the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to eat and drink to your own damnation. I should be sending you to hell with a lie in your right hand. Oh, my friend, you are in a very awful situation, in the most awful that I ever beheld man; you are on the brink of the grave; a few short days, and you will exchange time for eternity; not for an eternity of happiness, but for one of endless misery. You are going to hell. The last sentence seemed to strike like thunder in his ear. He started up from his pillow and asked eagerly how he knew that; how he could look into him, and read his lot. I know it, replied my friend, because you have

no faith ; and it is written he that believeth not shall be damned. You are in need, in the greatest need of salvation, and yet you quarrel with the terms on which God proposes it to you. As a friend, as a true friend, I must be honest with you ; in the greatest affection for your soul I tell you the worst, not that you may despair even yet of finding mercy if you throw yourself at the feet of Jesus, but I warn you that you have no time to lose, that now, this very moment, you must seek and embrace what you are destitute of, faith in the Son of God, without which you will inevitably be doomed to endless misery. The dying man, with a horrified countenance, uttered a suppressed 'ha,' and again reclined on his pillow in seeming insensibility. But my friend asked him if he should pray for him. 'If you please,' was the reply, which he accordingly did and left him.

The following day I visited him again, and stated how pained Mr. T—— had been to find him in so awful a state. And I can tell you, added he, that he pretty much pained me too. If he wounded you, I replied, it was only in order to heal you. If he pained you for a moment, it was only to lead you to endless comfort. A surgeon would be accounted very unskillful if he were to heal over the surface of a deep and dangerous wound before he had probed it to the bottom, before he had cut off the dead flesh. You in like manner were only shewn the depth and deadliness of your spiritual maladies, in order that you might in time seek for the healing of the good Physician—the Lord Jesus Christ. In your ease, no time is to be lost ; the King's business requires haste. You are already a dying man, and dying without faith. You object to

God's way of pardoning and receiving you into his favour. The questions you should ask yourself are, what are *my* wants? Is there any remedy to meet my case? And knowing there is a sufficiency in the Lord Jesus Christ to meet the case of the most abandoned, even yours, you should crucify your 'whys,' and your 'wherefores,' take God at his word, and believe the record that he has given of his Son. But, alas, a thick film was spread over his eyes through unbelief. He had eyes, but saw not; ears had he, but heard not; worldly conversation now beginning to usurp the place of spiritual. After prayer I left him with the following consideration,—My friend, though you have done all worldly things well, yet if you have left undone the main business of life—the salvation of the soul—it cannot possibly be well with you in the end. Our Lord has said, one thing is needful, and what a dreadful thing for any dying man to be destitute of that one thing which constitutes eternal life and blessedness.

He lingered yet many days, gradually sinking; by degrees he began to lose the faculties of memory and perception—the sure precursors of death. He underwent no change in a spiritual point of view, except, that as he drew nearer to his latter end, he became more keenly sensible of his misery and wretchedness, without being able by faith to lay hold on God's mercies through Christ. Often did he cry out, oh save me, but he cried to man, and not to God. He went down to Egypt for help where no help was, but did not asceud in spirit to heaven where alone help was to be found. Readily would he have given all that he possessed for a continuance in life, but the decree was gone forth, "Thou shalt surely die."

For the two last days that this unhappy man remained in the world, I was not permitted to see him, the cause of which I afterwards learnt was, that I might be kept in ignorance of his latter end; but although I was not present at the closing scene, I learnt from one who was that it was awful and wretched beyond description, that much was uttered by him which would ill beset these pages to record. He seemed even in life to have had a presage and foretaste of the world to come, uttering on one occasion these memorable words, '*It is bad with me now, it will be worse by-and-by.*'

Oh ye who love the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, behold in this death-bed scene, the hollowness, the emptiness, the nothingness of all such things. See what miserable comforters they are when comfort is most needed—See how they gnaw the conscience, and what a sting they leave behind. See all this, in order that you may flee such lying vanities while you have yet health and strength, and that you may come unto him who has said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28.



PROVIDENCE.

'Since all the downward tracts of time,
God's watchful eye surveys;
O who so wise to choose our lot,
And regulate our ways.'

THE doctrine of a peculiar Providence ever watchful over the servants of God is peculiarly encouraging and animating. It inspired both Old and New Testament Saints with confidence, and never fails under

all circumstances and events to fill the mind with courage in the midst of dangers and difficulties. ‘If,’ says Dr. Manton, ‘we believe in a God at all, we must believe that without his Providence nothing happens on earth, and that there is not a day of our life, nor an event in that day, but what was foreseen by God.’

A Christian is under the eye of God as a child is under the eye of the tender mother. In this way is he kept. Hence the prayer of David, “Keep me as the apple of the eye.” The human eye has five tunics to guard it against danger. The first resembles a spider’s web; the second is like a net; the third like a berry; the fourth like a horn; and the fifth is the eye-lid. These convey to us some faint idea of the various ways which Divine Providence takes to preserve our souls and bodies.

The Providence of God is interested in all the various concerns that relate to us. Our youth is guided and preserved by his care. He conducts us to maturity, and leads us on to old age. “Even to old age I am he, and to hoary hairs I will carry thee.” (Isai. xlvi. 4.) The term of our life is fixed by him. “Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?” (Job vii. 1.) To him are we indebted for all our success in life, the health of ourselves and families. It is he that chooses our inheritance; that continues or removes our comforts; to him we owe our preservation, and our progress in the heavenly way. He blesses to us the means of grace. All things are under his control; and without his blessing Paul may plant and Apollos water, but in vain.

Lord Craven lived in London in the time of the plague. To avoid it, he intended to remove into the

country. One day he overheard his negro servant making this remark ; ‘ I suppose my Lord is quitting London to avoid the plague, because *his* God lives in the country only.’ The observation struck him so forcibly that he determined to remain in town, and, by the Providence of God, he not only escaped the plague, but was a great help to his poor sick neighbours.

A scriptural view of divine Providence is adapted to produce in the mind the most important effects.

1. It will make us resigned to the afflictions of life, and we shall exclaim, “ It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good.” “ The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.”

2. It will give us fortitude in the moment of danger. If God have our times in his hand, he *can* help us ; and if he be our God, he *will* help us, and then what can discourage us ? The presence of God calms his peoples fears, and removes every painful apprehension. When Julius Cæsar was about to put to sea in a gale of wind, the master and rowers of the vessel were intimidated. On a sudden, Cæsar cried out, ‘ Fear nothing, for thou carriest Cæsar and his fortunes.’ The mariners, encouraged by the presence of so great a man, renewed their exertions and got out to sea.

3. It will give us a correct view of instruments as subordinate agents, controllable by and accountable to him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ; who restrained the rage of a Pharaoh, defeated the devices of a Haman, punished the pride of a Sennacherib, and overruled the designs of a Saul of Tarsus, by that powerful grace which influenced him to espouse the cause that he once laboured to

destroy. We shall not be alarmed by the threats of the mighty, nor be afraid of the fury of the oppressor; but remember that the hearts of all men are in the hands of the Lord, and he turneth them as the rivers of water whithersoever he will.

4. It will keep us humble in times of prosperity. 'All I have is from thee' will be our grateful language. To see God in all things, and to know that we have all things in God, will make the bitter sweet, and the sweet the sweeter.

5. It will be a powerful stimulus to prayer and praise. If all things are in his hand; if wisdom, and strength, and grace, come from him; if he superintends our mean affairs; if he averts dangers and bestows favors; if his watchful eye guides and directs: to whom can we go but to him? On whom can we depend but on him? And to whom should we direct our prayer for daily temporal and spiritual mercies but to him?

'His Providence is kind and large,
Both man and beast his bounty share,
The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care.'

R. C. W.

A VISIT TO A CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

NOT long ago, on a Sunday afternoon, I found my way to a boys Sunday-School at _____. It was a tolerable room, and contained at the time of my visit about sixty boys. The Superintendent was engaged in filling up the attendance book, and four or five respectable young men were fully occupied with their classes. By way of introducing myself I en-



(*Bridgerule School-House.*)

quired how the School got on. ‘We should do pretty well Sir, (replied the Master,) if the boys parents were more concerned in sending their children ; but it’s trying to human nature to find so little encouragement from the parents, many of them seem to consider it as quite a favour to *us* if they let their boy come here.’ I just reminded him that we must not expect to have every thing our own way, and that God would bless us if we went on strait in the path of duty ; and then (not wishing to hinder business) passed on to a class which had just stood out to read. The lesson was 3rd chap. of St. John, and the teacher was closely examining the boys as they proceeded. I know not which most pleased me, the readiness of the boys answers, or the simple method and pious manner in which they were questioned. The end and essence of Sabbath-School teaching were evidently not lost sight of, namely the *everlasting welfare* of the scholar. ‘Now my good boys,’ said the teacher, (in that kind tone which becomes such an office,) ‘we have been reading about

a very important truth, bat it's one of which I am afraid you know very little. The *new birth*, that's what our Lord has been here teaching Nicodemus. You were born *once*, were you not? 'Yes'. Well, you must be *born again* if you would ever enter heaven. The first time you were born, you were born a *sinner*, a child of wrath. You may notice this even in babies; I dare say you have seen a baby fret and scream if the meat was not ready the moment it wanted it, and I am sure that there are proofs enough as we grow older we have sin in us. Some of you, young as you are, have already committed sins, and your names are in God's book as transgressors. You have many a time sinned against him; neglected your prayers and pleased only yourself. There must be a change, you must have a new heart, and be new made, born again, of God's Holy Spirit. Find for me what is declared in Romans about 'the flesh.' 'Here, Sir' said a very small boy, eagerly holding up a Bible, "They that are in the *flesh* cannot please God." 'Now then,' said he (with much solemn tenderness,) 'we see what we *are* and what we must *become*. Do any of you think that you are so *born again*?' All felt it was a home question; it was coming to a point in which the sharpest scholar could not help himself. All were silent, and hung down their heads. He did not press it further, but most earnestly bid them consider and pray for the new heart. I marked one or two stealing a finger to his eye—a tear was doubtless there. Who shall say but that it was put into God's bottle, and that through means of this very lesson some of that class may one day be where tears are wiped from every eye, and crying is unknown. I could not help reflecting on my way home on what a decided improvement had lately

taken place in our Church Sabbath-Schools ; they are so much more spiritual, more experimental in their character ; for a child to gabble over a collect or the catechism is no longer thought sufficient. This change must of course be attributed under God to the increased spirituality of School teachers, and the attention of Clergymen to Sunday-Schools.

To all who love our venerable Establishment, it must be refreshing to perceive that not only every year is a band of young Ministers, deeply alive to their responsibility, sent into her pulpits, and thence faithfully preaching her *real* doctrines to their people, but that pious young persons of different ranks are strengthening the out-works by filling the inferior but useful offices of School Teachers, and District Visitors. What therefore, though some be shouting forth the corruptions of the Church of England, and others crying like the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, “Down with her even to the ground,” her friends need not fear for her efficiency, while they know that her Sunday-Schools are rising in spirituality, her Missionary Society, extending its operations, and increasing in its funds : and a blessed number of the candidates for her Ministry, waiting only their ordination to declare unto sinners the unsearchable riches of Christ.

AN OBSERVER.

EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS.

—Two young women were provided with Sixpences to give to the Church Missionary Society after a Sermon, but the daughter of a very respectable Farmer, who preceded them, much dressed, having put only one penny into the plate, they were seen to return the Sixpences into their pockets, and obeying the influence of such example only gave one penny each.

CONVERSION OF AN IRISH PAPIST.

LAST year a distressed Irish family of the Romish persuasion, applied to Dr B—— for relief. Their names were J. and Mary Lyon. The man had been a gentleman's servant, and being unfit for every other work, was in a starving condition, residing in Bristol. He was a man of sober habits, and appeared in his way, to be prepossessed in favour of religion. A Bible was given him, which he was in the habit of perusing every evening, though his wife disapproved of the plan, and was continually interrupting him in the prosecution of it. This woman was a furious bigot to Popery, and expressed herself in the most violent language, respecting any attempt in opposition to it. She declared, that if all the angels in heaven, and all the devils in hell were to come upon earth, she would never give way to the least idea of changing her religion. Her husband was a constant attendant upon the Church where Dr. B—— usually officiated, but she always refused to accompany him. However, about last Christmas, Dr. B—— being engaged to preach in another Church, she was persuaded to attend there in company with her husband; and in the course of the sermon, while Dr. B—— was expatiating on the love of Christ, she was so overcome by what she heard, she could hardly be prevented from calling out in the Church. She went home so affected, that she afterwards called upon Miss ——, a lady who had been kind to her, and expressed to her all that she felt. This lady called at Dr. B——'s house, and acquainted him with the change that had taken place in this poor creature's mind. The Doctor expressed a desire to see her; and the Sunday after, she ran into the vestry of

St. Mary Redcliffe's Church, threw herself upon her knees, and burst forth into some such exclamations as these—‘O my God! I thank thee that thou ever broughtest me under the preaching of this gentleman.’—‘O, Sir, I did not think that Christ loved us in such a manner as you said he did.’—‘O, Sir, you know not the love that has now taken possession of my soul.’ And she has gone on steadily ever since in the ways of religion, every day reading that Bible as much as her husband ever did in the days of her persecution of him for his attachment to the Sacred Scriptures. No weather, if she had her own will, would keep her from attendance on the sermons of that Minister under whom she had felt so deeply; and she has usually ever since attended his family prayers, although his house is nearly a mile distant from her lodgings. She has a nephew, a young Catholic Priest, situated at Bath, who hearing of what had occurred, sent her an offer of a pecuniary reward if she would return to the profession of the Catholic religion; but she said, that she would rather starve than give up her present faith.

She has lately with her husband, visited her nephew the Priest at Bath; when her bigotted relation, finding all endeavours fail to reclaim her from (what he thought) her heretical opinions, fell upon her husband, and beat him so unmercifully, that he was for some time confined to his room. But they have both continued stedfast in the faith, unmoved by persecution; to the praise and glory of him “who has thus called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

Jane, 1838.

THE SHEEP-DOG.

OBSERVING one morning lately how the Sheep-dog gathers the flock together from their dispersions, it was suggested to my mind, what a similar method the Shepherd of Israel uses to collect the thousands of his sheep: how out of the eater cometh forth meat, and out of the strong sweetness, inasmuch as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah causes even the roaring lion to constrain his own sheep to retreat to their strong hold. The roaring of that old lion warns the sheep of Christ, that the name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and are safe. That in him they are safe as Noah, when shut into the ark; as the man-slayer under the law, when he fled to the city of refuge; as the Israelites, when the consecrated blood was upon their door-posts; as Obadiah, from the persecutions of Ahab; as Elijah, from the rage of Jezebel. From all the curses of the violated law, from the wrath of God, from the dominion of sin, from the fear of death, the sheep of Jesus are delivered, and shall ere long arrive where the weary are for ever at rest. I thought, at the same time, in the train of reflection which occupied my mind about the Sheep-dog, how much more happy the Lord's people would be if they were more closely knit in the unity of the Spirit, the bond of peace, the fellowship of love, the hope of heaven; if they were more practically to remember that they are all one in Christ Jesus, in the harmonious tie of brotherly affection in this world, and are to be joined in the mutual participation of endless felicity in the next; if they were to recollect more effectually and more frequently, that whatever differences in non-essentials exist on earth,

yet, holding the Living Head, they will exist no more in Heaven, but be swallowed up with all the little prejudices of time in the broad grave of charity and undissolved and inextinguishable love. There in heaven there will be an universal display of love, an everlasting union of heart.

R. L.

VERSE SYSTEM.

Verse 31. (October 3.) "And thy house," through faith in the same Saviour.

Verse 32. "And they spake unto him," &c. further expounding and enforcing the meaning of being saved by faith in Christ.

Verse 33. "He and all his;" doubtless himself and the part of his family that were grown up, upon the profession of their own faith in Christ; and the children of the family, as the children of believing parents, and heirs of the promise which is "unto you and your children."* As when a stranger † would join himself in fellowship with Israel‡ of old, all his males must be circumcised, as the sign and seal of the privileges and engagements of that covenant; with joy does this now believing *stranger* desire to enrol himself and all his as parties concerned in all the "better promises," of that "better covenant," of which baptism is the appointed sign and seal.

Verse 35. "Let those men go;" either alarmed by the earthquake and by what they had heard of its effects; or for reasons given in other places (See chap. iv. 21, and v 40.) intending to punish them no further.

* Acts ii. 38. † A Gentile. ‡ Exodus xii. 48.

Verse 37. "Do they thrust us out privily;" the Apostle felt that it was for the glory of God it should not be supposed that they were imprisoned as evil doers; (1 Pet. iv. 15,) and therefore he makes use of his privilege as a Roman citizen* to constrain the magistrates to give a public testimony to their innocence by honourably dismissing them.

Verse 40. "And departed ;" seeing that their work here was done, (Philippi had been abundantly *helped*,† the foundation of that flourishing, and affectionate Church, to which the beautiful Epistle was afterwards written, had been laid in the families of Lydia and the gaoler,) and leaving too an example of that forbearance, and submission to "the powers that be," very important to be remembered by Ministers of the Gospel in like circumstances.

Chap. xvii. v. 1—9. (October 13—21.) Leaving Philippi they arrive at Thessalonica, from whence after having preached three Sabbath-days, through the fury of the unbelieving Jews, they are again forced to depart.

Verse 2. (October 14.) See 1 Thess. ii. 2.

Verse 4. (1 Thess. i. 5, 6.) Silvanus, mentioned in the 1st Epistle of the Thessalonians as the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, appears to be the same person as Silas.

Verse 6, 7. The Apostle speaks of these Thessalonians as having "received the word, in much affliction." (1 Thess. i. 6.) "Saying that there is another king," &c. These malicious Jews wanted to persuade

* It was a great crime by the Roman laws either to beat, or bind a Roman citizen, and especially uncondemned.

† Acta xvi. 9.

the ignorant Gentiles, that what the Apostles had spoken of Christ in in a spiritual sense—as the King of his Church, had been meant in a natural sense—as an earthly king, in opposition to the Roman Emperor. The enmity of the carnal mind will stick at nothing to accomplish its end. Sin has turned the world upside down, the Gospel *alone* can re-turn it, but men “love darkness rather than light,” and therefore would fain make ignorant ones believe the greatest absurdity—that the remedy is the cause of the disease.

Verses 10—15. (October 22—27.) They arrive at Berea; the Bereans receive the word, but the Jews still persecuting the Apostles, they go to Athens.

Verse 11. (October 23.) “These were more noble ;” that is, the Berean Jews were of a more fair and liberal mind, than the Thessalonian Jews; they would not condemn the Apostles unheard; therefore they search the Scriptures of the Old Testament to see whether what the Apostle spoke of Christ agreed with what was spoken in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning him. (Luke xxiv. 44.)

Verse 12. “Many of them ;” &c. a considerable number, not as at Thessalonica “some,” that is, some certain ones, one here and there. The same God that gave “all readiness of mind,” as a preparatory disposition, gave the faith to welcome the truth.

Verse 13. The Apostle gives us an awful account of the state of these Jews, and of the ruin they were thus bringing upon themselves in 1 Thess. ii. 14—16.

Verse 16—34 (October 28.—November 15.). The Apostle Paul, whilst waiting for his companions at

Athens, disputes with the philosophers, and afterwards preaches his famous sermon at Mars' Hill, but with small apparent success.

Verse 16. Athens was the most famous city in the world for learning, wisdom, and elegance, and the Apostle had a mind qualified by his education to have enjoyed these things; but the sight of a people "wholly given to idolatry" suffered him to take no notice of any thing but their awful spiritual condition "without hope and without God in the world." What a lesson may the Minister of the Gospel learn from this in his daily intercourse with a world that "lieth" in wickedness!

Verse 18. "The Epicureans" were a sect of those philosophers, or would-be-wise-men, who considered all happiness to consist in present worldly enjoyment, acknowledged no government of a God in the world, and lived accordingly; and the Stoics, while they allowed that there was a God, yet supposed that both God and themselves were ruled by fate, and therefore were not accountable for their actions, while they considered the chief good to be in what they called virtue; which, they seemed to consider, consisted in the practice of certain bodily mortifications and forced acts of selfdenial, for which they proudly thought they should be rewarded. Now to both these, differing as they did among themselves, the Apostle, as the preacher of the Cross, would appear a "babbler"—an idle chatterer. For, to the Epicurean, and Stoic of the *Heathen World*, the Sadducee and Pharisee of the *Jewish Church*, or the "lover of pleasure," and the self-righteous Moralist of the *Christian Church*, the faithful preacher of the humbling doctrines, and holy

practice of the Gospel of Jesus, will always be a “ babbler,” and his preaching foolishness.

“Jesus and the resurrection” being the two great subjects of his preaching, these poor heathen thought that they were two new gods whom the Apostle wished to lead them to worship in addition to the multitude which, like most other heathen nations, they already worshipped.

Verse 22. (November 3.) “Mars’ Hill;” a place so called, because it was dedicated to one of their false gods. There their chief Court of Justice was held ; and being therefore crowded with their wise men and others, was, in the Providence of God, a fit place for the proclamation of the Gospel message.



ON A ROBIN SINGING IN AUTUMN.

SWEET is the cuckoo’s blythsome lay,
Which hails the coming spring ;
Or skylark’s, when to greet the day,
He mounts on fearless wing .

Sweet are the melodies that burst
From summer’s leafy bowers,
Mid’ blossoms gay by sunshine nurst,
In bright and cloudless hours.

And richer still in woody lane,
 Pour'd to the moon's pale light,
 The nightingale's enchanting strain,
 Heard in the hush of night.
 But sweeter to my partial ear,
 When these no more are known,
 When leaves are changing, flowers are sere,—
 Mild Melodist! *thine own.*
 Thy warbling in the year's decline
 Wakes thoughts of deeper birth,
 Feelings that own a holier shrine
 Than music born of mirth.
 Hence, when the birds of summer seek
 A home in summer clime,
 To me thy artless measures speak
 Of harmony sublime,
 E'en of that melody of heart
 The Christian knows within,
 Which faith, and hope, and love impart
 To souls redeemed from sin.
 Such mark unmov'd around them fade
 Joy's flowers of beauty brief;
 And hopes, like trees which cast their shade,
 Change—and then shed their leaf.
 And many a friend, once lov'd—enjoy'd,
 Like summer birds are gone,
 Whose absence leaves an aching void
 In hearts thus left alone.
 Still, unto these at times are given
 Strong faith in brighter days,
 Meek hopes—which seek their home in heav'n,—
 Pure love, and songs of praise.
 Nor can death's wint'ry chill restrain
 Their song, or check their wing ;
 Those notes shall be resumed again
 In heaven's eternal spring.

(*Woodbridge, October.*)

BERNARD BARTON.

REV. H. A. SIMCOE, (Penheale-Press) Cornwall.

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CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON THE STUDY OF NATURE.

'Wonderful are all his works;
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance, always with delight.'—MILTON.

In following the course of the seasons it has been the desire of the Christian Naturalist to direct the attention of his readers to some of those portions of the visible world, which might serve to impress them with a deep sense of the glory and goodness of the great Creator. Each, therefore, of the principal scenes of 'the rolling year,' and some of the grander spectacles of nature, have in their turn been presented to our thoughts; and for awhile detained our musings. We have taken a glance at the stern features of Winter; surveyed the characteristic beauties of Spring, Summer, and Autumn; examined the most interesting of its Insect Tribes; meditated upon the wonders of the Starry Heavens; expatiated over the waves of the mighty Ocean; moralized upon the Falling Leaf; and now we are again arrived at that month which closes the calendar of nature, and shuts up the scenes of the

revolving months. What now remains but to drop the curtain over this part of our labours, and to recommend to all those who have gone along with us in this brief survey of the works of God, to seek for a more extensive knowledge, or a more habitual acquaintance with those interesting topics of enquiry, upon which the necessary limits here prescribed to the Christian Naturalist have only permitted him to suggest a few imperfect hints. Rapidly as we have passed over the field of our observations, it will be admitted that enough has been said to shew, that the more we look into the operations of nature, the greater cause we shall see to admire, and bless the divine hand by which they are all guided, and directed. We cannot contemplate these with any attention without being struck with the importance of attending to them more, and without feeling the force of St. Paul's observation, Rom. i. 20, "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." And this conclusion is most important, since it shews us that all "they are without excuse" who do not thus seek to obtain a true and spiritual acquaintance with the being and perfections of the Almighty. Nature thus rightly studied is, and must be, the handmaid of grace. If Revelation is the temple, within which sits enthroned the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nature is the sublimest porch which leads to it; and entering here we ascend higher and higher, and discover more and more of the Omnipotent mind, and benevolent will of him who has made nothing in vain.

In summing up, therefore, the importance of attending more to these things than is generally done, and

with a view to point out the spiritual advantages that would result from a closer and better knowledge of nature, the Christian Naturalist would not take leave of his readers without suggesting to them the following observations.

1st That an extensive acquaintance with the wonderful works of God will tend much to humble the natural pride of the human heart. Beautiful, curious, and astonishing as are the facts which the natural history of the things around us presents to our notice, we shall find that each of them contains secrets which will never, perhaps, be unfolded to mortal eyes. The wisest have been obliged to confess their ignorance even of many of the most simple laws of nature. 'The great first cause, least understood,' still wraps up many things in clouds, and darkness, to teach us our littleness; to stain the pride of all human glory, and to make us confess our folly, weakness, and guilt. It was not until the Almighty had spoken to Job from out of the whirlwind, and made all the glory of his works to pass before him in splendid review, that he exclaimed, in the language of true penitence, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xiii. 5, 6.) From a view therefore of the mysteries of the natural world, we shall be prepared in some measure to appreciate the mysteries of the spiritual. The wonders which the one unveils will leave us without excuse, if we refuse to admit that which is made known to us in the other. Thus instead of rejecting the mystery of "God manifest in the flesh," or any other of the Gospel mysteries, because these are things "hard to be understood," we shall rather esteem

them as evidences that they have proceeded from the same God who has written the characters of mystery, no less than of beauty, over all his works.

Connecting also the history of Redemption with that world which forms the theatre of this great event, every object in it is invested with a charm, insomuch as it is a precious memorial of the Son of God, and of the circumstances under which he came to visit us, in great humility. ‘It is the glory of the world,’ says a distinguished preacher, ‘that he who formed it, dwelt on it; of the air, that he breathed in it; of the Sun, that it shone upon him; of the ground, that it bore him; of the sea, that he walked upon it; of the elements, that they nourished him; of the waters, that they refreshed him; of us men, that he lived and died among us, yea that he lived and died for us; that he assumed our flesh and blood, and carried it to the highest heavens, where it shines as the eternal wonder, and ornament of the creation of God.’

The progressive character of our knowledge of natural, as well as of spiritual things, is another argument for the cultivation of both these kinds of knowledge. In each of these studies, for which the human soul is so admirably fitted by its restless desire to look into all mysteries, there is yet much to be learnt, and much indeed that we can only hope to learn in eternity. As yet we see many things in the kingdom of nature as well as of grace, “through a glass darkly.” But it shall not be always thus. And assuredly there is nothing to which the renewed mind looks forward with purer emotion, than to the anticipation of that day when in God’s light it shall see light; and when, as it respects all natural as well as spiritual difficulties, the thick

film that now beclouds, and darkens our mental vision shall be purged away. And if in the midst of our profound ignorance we are yet able to receive such a high degree of gratification from the revelations of God in his works, and in his word; if in the contemplation of the beautiful analogy that now subsists between them we are able to find so many delightful sources of contemplation opened to us; what indeed shall be our enjoyment and satisfaction, when, in the highest sense of the sacred language, "the secrets of the Most High shall be with us, and by his light we shall be enabled to walk through all darkness." To that high and holy fraction of the glorified spirits, it must be our duty continually to look forward. For in the midst of so much that is lovely and captivating around us, there is also still much more of sin and wretchedness. The whole creation as yet groaneth, and travaileth, and waiteth for its redemption. See Rom. viii. 18—23. It is only therefore by directing the thoughts to a world of boundless light, knowledge, and happiness, of which the present affords but a dim anticipation, that man can be assisted to learn how "all things work together for good to them that love God." And further, it is only by connecting both worlds in his view, that man can either understand his place in the scale of being, or be led to seek after the glorious prize of immortality. The greatest of our poets observes—

— 'What if earth

Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
Each to the other like, more than is thought?'

Who indeed can doubt that as an uninterrupted chain of beings descends from man to brutes, from brutes to insects; so it ascends likewise by the same

beautiful gradation from man to angel, to archangel, and to inconceivable orders of celestial spirits. How sublime, then, how unutterable the idea of these glorious beings standing around the throne of their great Creator, and hymning forth his praises as they did on the first morning of creation! How overwhelming the thought that the dignity of the highest of these beings, bears after all no greater proportion to that of Him who dwells in unapproachable glory, than a gilded cloud on which the evening sun has impressed his beams, does to the great abyss of light from which it derives its reflected beauty!

Considerations of this sort when applied to ourselves may well lead us to exclaim with David, "Lord what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" They may also teach us, while we fall down and adore the riches of God's mercy in Christ, to cultivate more earnestly that knowledge of God in his works and his word, by which only we can be raised above "the clods of the valley;" and by which we shall be permitted at length, in virtue of a true and lively union with Christ, to stand complete in him who is the head of all principality, and power; to take our station among the highest of celestial beings, and again to wear a more dazzling crown of immortality; a more glorious robe of righteousness than Adam wore when he was first created in the image of his Maker, and proclaimed king of this lower universe.

E. B.

An unbelieving soul treads upon the promise, as a man upon ice at first going on it; it is full of fears and tumultuous thoughts lest it should crack.—*Gurnall*.



ST. KEYNE WELL.

IN *name*, in *shape*, in *quality*
This well is very quaint;
The *name* to lot of Kayne befel
—No over-holy saint.

The *shape*—four trees of divers kind—
Withy, Oak, Elm and Ash,
Make with their roots an arched roofe,
Whose floor this spring doth wash.

The *quality*—that man or wife
 Whose chance or choice attains
 First of this sacred stream to drinke
 Thereby the *mastery* gains.

Old Legend.

Did this Well indeed possess the quality thus ascribed to it, the little village of St. Keyne would we doubt ~~not~~ be more frequented; its present peace disturbed, and this very place where ~~prayer~~ is now wont to be made, rendered a scene of occasional confusion. For the *mastery* seems the aim of many married persons; yet where this unscriptural and unblest point has been gained, (especially by the *wife*,) though many a coarse joke may be furnished for a godless world; though good order and discipline may prevail, yet seek not in *that* dwelling for domestic happiness—the only bliss of Paradise that has survived the fall. No! the order of heaven (ever the best judge of what is best) is perverted; each party is in the wrong place; there is a want of principle, and the woman has sacrificed one of the sweetest attributes of her sex.

'O blest with temper whose unclouded ray,
 Can make to-morrow cheerful as to-day;
 She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
 And if she rules him, never shews she rules;
 Charms by accepting, by submitting aways,
 Yet has her humour most when she obeys.'

Mr. Simeon relates of Mr. and Mrs. Thomason, that during the ten years he lodged with them, they never had an angry word. This is a rare instance, for the marriage state brings many trials as well as comforts. We become too so intimately acquainted with each other's failings and follies, with the weak points and angles of our characters, which, if rudely exposed,

cht to the quick, and are felt as a breach of confidence! Then servants, children, pecuniary matters, and family affairs place us in new and untried positions, and call continually for the exercise of sympathy, tenderness, mutual confidence, to bear and forbear. Husband and wife therefore are like lock and key which should fit exactly, and which will rather break than open except the wards be answerable. To one who considers that marriage is 'an honorable estate instituted of God in the time of man's innocency,' had a lovely type of the union betwixt Christ and his Church, what can be more grievous and depressing than to witness either the stern repulsive tyranny, or cold indifference of a husband towards "the weaker vessel," or the cross-grained, uncivil, disrespectful bearing of a wife toward her lord? Impossible can it be for these to unite in their religious duties, or exercise that holy influence over their household which ensures affection and respect. Impossible can it be for these, who have embittered this world to each other, to look with any just hope to a world above—

"Where atmosphere is holy love."

Reader! wouldst thou visit the well of St. Keyne? Seek not its crystal spring as waters of strife, but see rather a pleasing emblem of the marriage state. The trees that stand as a group, and form a roof to the well are of different height, nature, and size; yet are their roots so interwoven as to make at the bottom one mass. And should it not be thus with those who are heirs together of the grace of life? The rapturous ecstasy of youthful love may have subsided; the winds of adversity may have stripped them of their green spring beauty; age may have chilled the currents

of their affections; but they are unwithered still, and their hearts are mingled into one. Rooted and grounded in holy love, they are gladdened by the same sunshine, and secretly refreshed by the same life-giving waters beneath; and each year as it passes over their heads, divesting them of some outward graces, finds them only the more closely and inseparably united. T.R.

MEANS OF CHRISTIAN ADVANCEMENT.

SIR,—I am much pleased with your delightful little paper on Christian Advancement. I remember reading a *practical* illustration of the great truth it presses on your readers—the necessity of our allowing *proper* time for meditation, prayer, and reading the word, if we really intend and desire to “grow in grace.” What is there suggested of rising two hours earlier to redeem time for the most important of all objects, was actually practised by Colonel Gardiner, and its good effects I will now state to your readers. The bustle and occupations of a soldier are peculiarly unfavourable to the Christian life, without great watchfulness, and diligent use of the Bible, and prayer. So Cornelius found it, and so did Colonel Gardiner; and they have left a striking lesson for the use of all whose time is swallowed up in worldly business of the necessity of using some *extraordinary* exertions to secure a portion of it for the above purposes, as also of the *certain* blessings which shall follow it. It is recorded of Gardiner that he scrupulously devoted two hours in the morning to spend them with God, before the business of the day. When the regiment marched at six he rose at four, that he might enjoy the sweet prime,

and have glorious company with the Father, and the Son by the Holy Spirit. Now it was that looking into the little spiritual world within him, "his spirit made diligent search." And having found by diligent search how it was with him, he would cry, "Search me, O Lord, and try me!" Now it was that he went to the Father of his Lord Jesus Christ; and with a heart full of nothing but a sense of its emptiness and material vileness, pleaded the faultiness that is laid up in Jesus. And he, who " filleth the hungry with good things," gave, in answer to his earnest petitions, "grace for grace," and strength for the day. So that he found, by happy experience, the fulfilment of God's comfortable assurance to those who trust to him for help, "As is thy day, so shall thy strength be." And marvellously did the Lord prove himself to him "a keeper who never slumbereth nor sleepeth," in the manifold dangers to which he was exposed on every side. Satan assaulted him with the peculiar temptations of his situation, but he was upheld by his beloved Saviour, who has "bruised the Serpent's Head." The world courted him with its pomps and vanities, but he was supported with his Lord's words, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And the flesh tempted him to join in the excesses which he beheld on every side; but he took fresh courage in the promise, that since the Son had made him free, "he should be free indeed." Thus was he upheld, leaning on a Covenant God, and believing that what he had asked faithfully in the morning he should obtain effectually; and his Lord said unto him day by day, "Be it unto thee according to thy faith." In a word, he dates his continued preservation, and the sweet peace of God (which

he says he enjoyed throughout the day,) to this practice of rising to meditate and pray. O what do we hear on every side, but Christians languidly observing how weak they are, and that they do not grow in grace. Now what this must be attributed to, I think we may gather from the above narrative. For if his advancement was clearly owing to *his setting apart resolutely a due portion of time* for communion with God, we may fairly conclude that the want of spiritual progress must be mainly traced to the neglect of it. Surely there is nothing so hard as to bring a man to commune with his own heart, and to look at himself in the glass of Scripture. This only can shew us our true likeness, and how far the features of God's image are restored again to our soul. Let us as Christians engage perseveringly in the business of meditation and *heart work*, and we shall not long complain of our barrenness. At another time, I shall submit to you some thoughts which I have found profitable on this absolutely necessary work for thriving Christians—*communion with self and with God*. For the present I conclude with sending you a few short rules of the immortal Bunyan, which I trust will be found useful to help on poor pilgrims Zionwards.

BUNYAN'S ADVICE.

1. Get into the way. (John xiv. 6.)
2. Then study it. (Haggai i. 7.)
3. Then strip, and lay aside every thing that would hinder. (Hebr. xii. 1.)
4. Beware of by-paths. (Jer. vi. 16.)
5. Do not gaze and stare too much about thee, but be sure to ponder the path of thy feet. (Prov. iv. 25—27, Matth. vi. 14.)

6. Do not stop for any that call after thee, whether it be the world, the flesh, or the devil; for all these will hinder thy journey if possible. (Ecclesiastes i. 2. Proverbs i. 10.)

7. Be not daunted with any discouragements thou meetest in the way. (Deuteronomy xxxi. 6; Psalm xxvii. 14, Psalm xxi. 24.)

8. Take heed of stumbling at the cross. (Luke ix. 23, Matthew x. 24, 26.)

9. Cry hard to God for an enlightened mind, and a willing heart, and God give thee a prosperous journey. (Psalm cxliii. 3.)

ON THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

1. GRACE once rooted in the heart, can never be removed. See for this purpose Rom. xi. 29, Matt. xxiv. 24, 1 John viii. 19, 27, John x. 28, Rom. viii. 35; Luke xiii. 132, 2 Cor. vi. 21, 22, Eph. iv. 30; &c. &c. Beauteous may be taken from 1st, of the dearness, strength, constancy, and inviolableness of God the Father's love unto his children. It is dearer than a mother's to her sweetest babe, Isai. xliv. 16. It is stronger than the mountains, Isai. liv. 10. It is as constant as the courses of the sun and moon and stars; of the day and of the night, Jer. xxxi. 35, 36, and xxxii. 20, 21. It is as sure as God himself, Psalm lxxxix. 36, &c. &c.

2ad. Christ's triumphant session and intercession at his Father's right hand, which may for ever, with sweetest peace and freedom from slavish trembling, assure us of our rootedness in Christ, constancy in grace, an everlasting abode with him in the other

world. He that will rend us from Christ's mystical Body, being once implanted into him by a lively, fruitful faith, and blessedly knit unto him by his Spirit, as fast as the sinews of his precious body are knit unto his bones, his flesh to his sinews, and his skin to his flesh; must pull him out of heaven, and remove him from the right hand of his Father. What so furious or infernal power can or dare lay a finger on us in this kind? He hath taken the poisoning power out of every thing that should hurt us, or hale us back to hell. He hath conquered, captivated, carried in triumph, and chained up for ever all the enemies of our souls, and enviers of our salvation. They may exercise us in the mean time for our good, but they shall never be able to execute their malicious wills, or any mortal hurt upon us, either here or in the next life.

3rd. The irrevocable assignation of the blessed Spirit, Ephes. i. 13, 14, and iv. 30. And who or what can or dare reverse the deed of the Holy Ghost, or break up his seal. Here, then, as you see, the Holy and Blessed Trinity is the unmoveable ground of our going on in grace.

4th. The lasting and immortal power of the word, once rooted in a good and honest heart, Luke viii. 15, 1 Peter i. 26.

5th. The certainty and sweetness of promises to this purpose, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40, Zech. x. 12, John viii. 12, 2 Saml. vii. 14, 15, Psalm lxxxix. 31, &c. &c.

6th. The force and might of faith, 1 Peter i. 2—5.

7th. The efficacy of Christ's prayer, Luke xxii. 32, John xvii. 15—20, Rom. viii. 34.

8th. The durable vigour of saving graces, John iv. 14, Rom. xi. 29.

2nd. The inability, nay impossibility, of all causes or creatures to pluck out of God's hand, John x. 30; or to draw any of his to a total or final falling away.

1st. It is not the Devil himself can do it, 1 John v. 18.

2nd. It is not the world, 1 John v. 4; John vi. 33.

3rd. It is not the concurrent fury, and united forces of all the powers of darkness, Matt. xvi. 16.

4th. It is not sin, 2 Saml. vii. 14, 16; Psalm lxxxix. 31, &c. &c.

5th. It is not weakness of faith, and other graces; Matt. xii. 20; Isai. xlii. 8.

6th. It is not the imposture of false prophets, Matt. xxiv. 24.

7th. It is no creature or created power, Rom. viii. 38, 39.

VERSE SYSTEM.

Verse. 28. (November 4.) "To the unknown God." The Athenians were famous for the vast number of gods they worshipped, and also for receiving gods which were worshipped by other nations, and which were therefore *unknown*, strange, or foreign to them. It is not unlikely,* that "the unknown God" to whom this altar was built was indeed the God of the Jews—the true Jehovah, whom they had ignorantly placed on a level with their idol gods, and whose real nature, as "Lord of heaven and earth," the Apostle

* From the inscription—"the unknown God," not *gods*; and from the fact that the title *unknown* applied particularly to the Lord JEHOVAH; because the Jews, through reverence, never mentioned his name, except on most solemn occasions, so that no foreigner could ever learn any name peculiar to him.

had now a glorious opportunity of setting before them

Verse 25. "As though he needed any thing." Micah 4,7; Psalm 1, 12, 13, will show the meaning of this. The lower orders of the nation, ignorant of the spiritual nature of God, thought that their gods actually stood in need of their sacrifices and offerings; a delusion which the Priests of heathen countries always endeavour to keep up, that they may make a gain of the ignorant worshippers. See the story of Bel and the Dragon, in the Apocrypha.

Verse 26—28. The end for which the ONE GOD made all nations to spring from one common Parent, was that they might seek the knowledge of their common Creator. He that "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth," had so determined the times, that up to the moment in which the Apostle was speaking they had been left to themselves to prove how far they could "feel after him and find him" without the preaching of his revealed will. How far they had found him was sufficiently clear, from their ignorant worship of "the unknown God;" yet the reason of their not finding him was not that he was far from any of them, but their sinful non-improvement of that knowledge of "his eternal power and Godhead;" which "the things that are made" are abundantly sufficient to prove: their loving the service of the "creature more than the Creator,"—a reason which left them without excuse.*

Verse 30, 31. "The times of this ignorance God winked at," &c. "Thus far he whose ways are not

* Read attentively Rom. i, 18—23, 28. And remarks on chap. xiv. verse 17, at page 166 of this volume.

as our ways," had left the heathen world "a law unto themselves." (Rom. ii. 14.) Though he had not left them "without witness" that he was the God that ought to be worshipped, he had not given them the clear command of his written word; but now the fulness of his appointed time being come, the full light of revealed truth, which would henceforth take away every plea of ignorance, and the full force of the Gospel command, applying equally to Jew and Gentile,—to the learned Philosopher, and the ignorant people,—came to "all men and every where!"

Verse 31. He would have his hearers consider that the command to repent should be listened to by *all*, because a day was appointed when *all* would have to give account. That there would be a day of account, is the word which the Apostle preached declared, the well-established fact of the Resurrection, as the great proof that all the words of Jesus were true, was a sufficient assurance.

Chap. xviii, 1—17. (November 16th to December 2.) Arrives at Corinth; works with his hands for his support; preaches Christ; Jews oppose; Crispus and many others believe; the Lord encourages him in a vision; continues a year and six months there; brought before Gallio, who dismisses the complaint.

Verse 8. (November 18.) "And wrought;" he laboured with his own hands to keep himself, as he tells the Corinthians, from being "burdensome;" to cut off occasion from any who might say that he had any but the purest motives in preaching the Gospel. See 1 Cor. ix. 18, 2 Thess. iii. 8, 9. It was a common practice among the Jews, however high their rank, to bring up their children to some trade. They have a

saying, ‘That he that teaches not his son a trade, does as if he taught him to be a thief.’ Such was the case therefore with St. Paul, thought of good family, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.

Verse 6. “Paul was pressed in the spirit,” &c. The return of these dear fellow-labourers, who had been instructed to follow him from Berea, (chap. xvii. 15,) and one of whom at least had been sent by him to Thessalonica, from whence he had brought him the cheering news that his children walked in the truth, (1 Thess. iii. 1, 2, 6,) seems to have made good the scriptural truth, “As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend.” The help of their presence seems to have constrained him with more than common zeal, to have passed from the calmness of sober reasoning (verse 4) by which he would make the matter clear to the understanding; to the glowing warmth of eloquent application to their hearts and affections of the great Gospel truth—that Jesus was Christ. His own words afterwards written to these same bearers (2 Cor. v. 13,) are interesting in connexion with this.

Verse 6. “Shook his raiment,” &c. (Neh. x. 13, Mark x. 14, &c.)

Verse 10. “For I have much people,” &c; many still wandering sheep that were to be brought into the fold; (John x. 16,) many “such as should be saved,” to be added to the Church; (Acts ii. 47,) “much people” to be made “willing” in the day of God’s power, (Psalm cx. 3) by the ministry of the Apostle.

POETRY.

WINTER.

THE withered leaves are fallen low,
The forest trees are bare;
Fierce storms of wind, and rain, and snow,
Sweep through the troubled air;
Still here and there some flowers are found
Within a shelter'd spot of ground,
Screen'd from the wintry gale;
Which nursed and cradled by the storm,
Unfold their frail and lovely form,
Their perfume sweet exhale.

Season of Death! thy features dread—
A striking emblem shew
Of that dark winter sin hath spread
Around this vale of woe;
Where only withered trees appear,
Which bear no fruit from year to year,
While fierce and uncontroll'd
Corruption's deep o'erwhelming tide
Hate, unbeliev, revenge and pride
Their course impetuous hold.

Yet even in this desert land,
Some heavenly flowers are found;
Which, sown by an Almighty hand,
Waft their sweet scents around:
Preserved by his unceasing care,
They brave the cold ungenial air,
Safe from each hurtful foe;
And, though concealed from human eye,
The fragrance sweet they send on high
Discovers where they grow.

Soon shall this dreary prospect cease,
Soon shall young Spring arise,
Waving the radiant bow of peace,
Across the stormy skies.
Her smile shall deck the verdant bowers;
Her hand shall strew a thousand flowers,
O'er valley, hill, and plain;

But shall this world, so cold and dead,
By sin and sorrow overspread,
Say! shall it live again?

When shall that blessed morn arise,
By prophet bards foretold?
When shall our long expected eyes,
Its glorious dawn behold?
Long and severe hath Winter frowned,
Upon the dry, unfruitful ground,
Destroying fruit and flower;
When shall the promised Spring appear,
And o'er the waste and blighted year
Exert her magic power?

Arise, thou Spirit of the Lord,
Why dost thou still delay?
Oh! shed thy gracious dew abroad,
Thy healing beams display;
Speak—and the gloom shall disappear,
The raging storm, besmeared, shall hear
Thy all-commanding word;
The desert shall as Eden bloom,
The barren wilderness become
The garden of the Lord.

A. N. E.



REV. H. A. SIMCOE, (Penhalick-Press) Cornwall.

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